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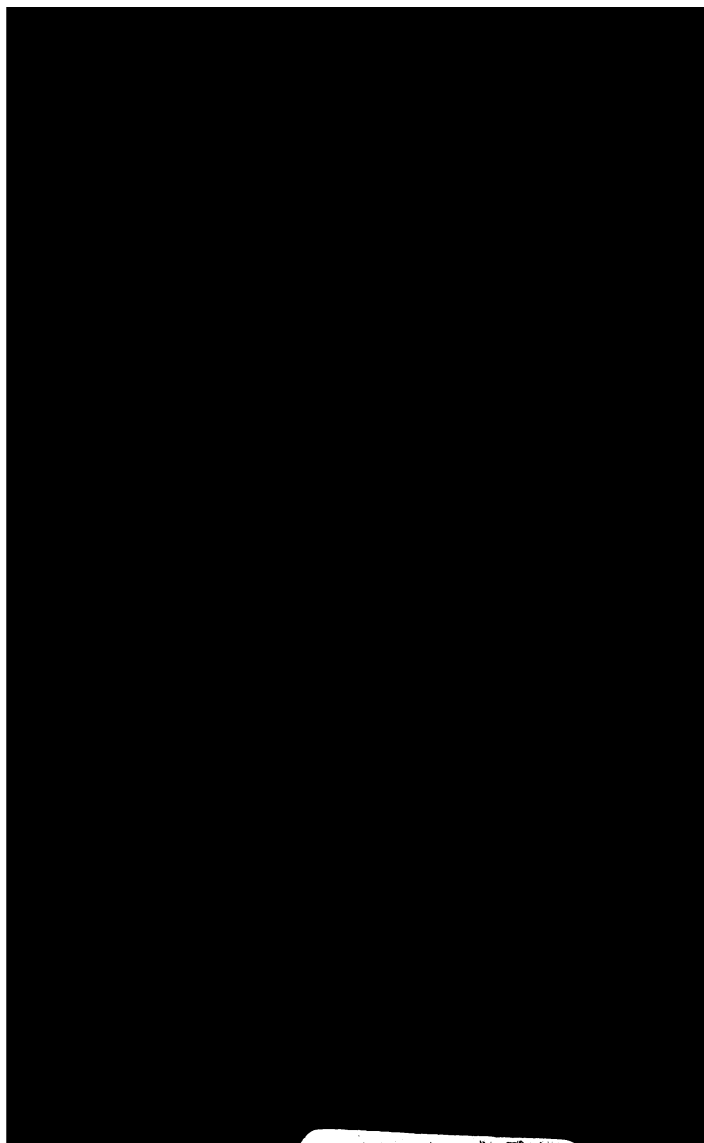
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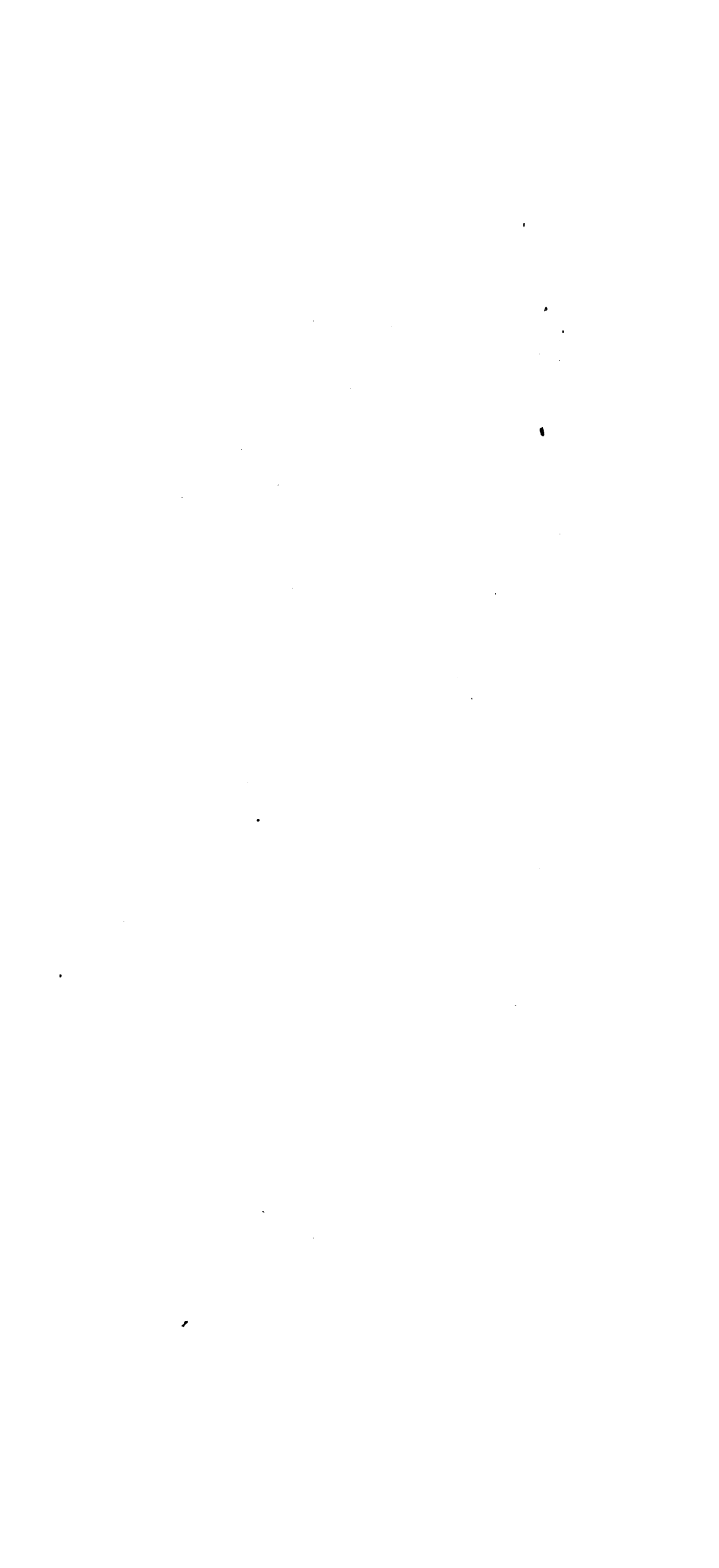
















ESSAYS

THE

THE IN PROSE,

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

VOLUME

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1900



ESSAYS
AND
TALES IN PROSE.

BY
BARRY CORNWALL.

By the Author of "The

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



BOSTON:

TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.

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P R E F A C E .

THE Author of the following Essays and Tales has addressed a letter to us, part of which we extract, as an introduction to these volumes.

‘ As far as I am able to invest you with the exclusive right of publishing, in the United States, an edition of these prose writings, I do so, by this letter. Some of them, you will take note, have never been printed in their present state before.

‘ You will find, amongst these selected papers, some which were written as early as 1820, and one as late (I think) as 1848 or 1849;—some which pretend to be “lively,” and a few

which are strictly "severe";—several essays, chiefly on poetical subjects, none which are very elaborate;—and a story or two, in which the pathos perhaps predominates, while the moral (like the light under the bushel) is hidden from the careless observer.

'One of the pieces I think had better be omitted. I refer to an essay on English poetry, —written hastily, many years ago, —very imperfect, —by no means coming up to my idea of the subject at that time, —and very far below it now.

'You have at present such admirable writers of prose fiction in America, (amongst others, Mr. Hawthorne, and Mr. Longfellow,) that I might reasonably feel a little diffident as to the reception which my little pieces of prose are likely to encounter from your countrymen. But my critics — English as well as American — have for the most part been always so good-natured to my efforts, that I have no hesitation in throwing myself upon their kindness once again.'

B. W. PROCTER.

LONDON, OCTOBER 13, 1852.

PREFACE.

v

We have taken the liberty of including in these volumes, the 'Essay on English Poetry,' referred to by Mr. Procter as a piece he thinks 'had better be omitted,' as that article, on its appearance in the *Edinburgh Review*, was very generally perused, and highly commended by the public.

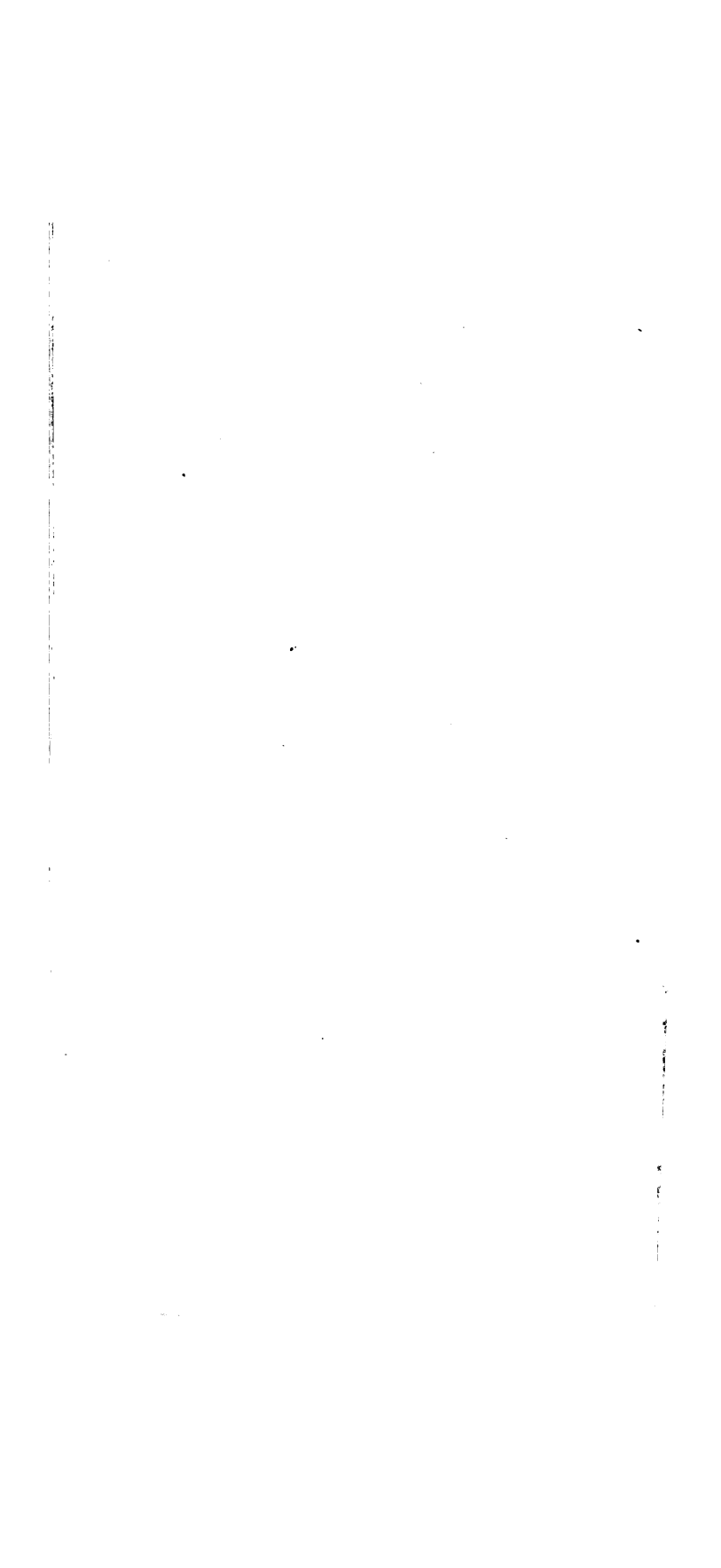
THE PUBLISHERS.

Boston, Nov. 1852.



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MEMOIR AND ESSAY ON THE GENIUS OF SHAKSPERE.

PART I.

§ 1.

OF the personal history of Shakspeare — the greatest genius, beyond doubt or cavil, that ever the world produced — little now can with certainty be shown. The registers of Stratford; his own Sonnets; a few casual references to him, in the writings or sayings of cotemporary authors; and all the sources from which materials for his life may be safely extracted, are reckoned up. The public of his time had no curiosity on the subject, or the writers of his time had no anxiety to collect or yield information, regarding him; and he himself — beyond, even,

‘ That last infirmity of noble minds,’

the desire of fame — did not think it worth while to place materials for his own history on record; or, secure of such immortality as earth can bestow, was content that we should track him into the depths and recesses of his being, by the light of his genius alone. What he did, or thought, or suffered, in his own indi-

vidual person, is now mere matter for ingenious conjecture. We are sure that his mind was vast, liberal, compassionate, generous ; — that he saw human nature on every side, detecting it in its many masks and changes ; — that he penetrated into the innermost mysteries of man ; that

‘ From this bank and shoal of time ’

his intellect soared upwards, and held commerce with the stars ; with our dim ‘ Hereafter ; ’ and with worlds and agencies beyond our own ; and knowing all this, our curiosity as to the possessor of faculties so varied and wonderful, and our consequent disappointment on being baffled at every point of inquiry, becomes proportionably great.

It is not the least singular of the causes which have cast obscurity upon the life of Shakspeare, that so much public apathy should have existed amongst his cotemporaries. History, indeed, which has hitherto dealt in generals, or has labored only to rescue from oblivion the lives of conquerors and kings, forbore, as was to be expected, from recording the birth or death of a poet, humbly born, and distinguished by no other crown than a wreath of unfading laurel : but that the man of whose writings ‘ rare Ben Jonson ’ had said that they were such

‘ As neither man nor muse can praise too much ; ’

whom he addressed as ‘ Soul of the Age,’ celebrating him above

‘ All that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
Sent forth — ’

and predicting, in just and memorable verse, that

‘He was not of an age, but — FOR ALL TIME!’

—that *he* should have eluded all research, or should not have stimulated some one of his coevals to give forth to the world what could then have readily been collected respecting him, requires still to be explained. He was admitted, in his own time, to be the first dramatist of his country; and there can be no question but that he was so. That Fletcher, Beaumont, or other playwrights, may, during an interval of fashion or popular caprice, have been greater favorites, is probable enough. It is possible, even, that some critics (now forgotten) may have preferred inferior writers. [But no other poet or dramatist of our country could, even for a moment, put forth such substantial claims to enduring fame, as seem to have been allowed, by the general voice, to Shakspeare.] Ben Jonson, the only dramatist who could compete with him, frankly and wisely yields the precedency; and to oppose any other writer, however respectable in his way or extolled in his age, would be, to the last degree, absurd and hopeless.

How is it that no letters of Shakspeare, no memoranda respecting him, or his transactions with the theatres, or with his brother actors, should have escaped? It is true that the fire, which occurred in 1613, may have consumed his papers relating to the theatres, when it consumed his playhouse, the Globe. But one must still marvel that a writer on whom so many elegies were showered, and whose reputation was such that, in 1623, a monument was erected to his memory in

his native town, should have passed away with so little of cotemporaneous record or comment. Several persons, including Betterton, the famous actor, visited Stratford during the seventeenth century, and made inquiries respecting Shakspeare ; one of them interrogating an ancient inhabitant of that town, who was himself born about the time of Shakspeare's death ; but neither history nor tradition had furnished him with more than one or two circumstances, and even these are encountered by opposite statements. Under all these difficulties, nothing remains but to take some things upon trust.

Without submitting to the reader, therefore, in minute detail, the reasons that induce me to prefer one hypothesis to another, and to accept one and reject another statement, I shall take leave to adopt silently those only which appear to me to approach nearest to the truth. It would be painful, indeed, if, from too fastidious a scepticism, we were to deprive ourselves or others of the pleasure of supposing that we know something, at least, of our great poet's origin.

§ 2.

To obtain strict legal proof of the birth or parentage of Shakspeare is now, apparently, beyond the power of research. His identity with the ' William the son of John Shakspeare,' who was baptized in 1564, has not, I imagine, been completely established. Sufficient is known, however, to induce a belief that the ordinary accounts of his parentage and birth are well founded.

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, then, was baptized on the 26th of April, 1564. The words ' Gulielmus filius

Johannes Shakspeare,' are on that day entered on the baptismal register, of the parish church of Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickshire. The John Shakspeare, from whom this great 'son' descended, was apparently a person of some property and importance at Stratford, and traded as a glover or dealer in wool.

Of the ancestry of John Shakspeare it is impossible to speak with any certainty ; but it is known that he himself arrived at the dignity of bailiff of Stratford ; that the title of 'Master' was prefixed to his name, and that he married a lady of good family. The mother of our dramatist bore, before her marriage with John Shakspeare, the name of Mary Arden. She was the daughter of Robert Arden (a gentleman possessing a landed estate at Willingcote, or Wylnecote, in Warwickshire), whose father was groom of the chamber to King Henry VII. A Sir John Arden, who held some office of honor near the person of the same sovereign, was the uncle of her before-mentioned grandfather, and also son of one Eleanor Hampden, of Buckinghamshire ; who, herself, was a member of the family from which the illustrious patriot John Hampden afterwards descended.

Under the will of Robert Arden, which bears date the 24th of November, 1556, his daughter Mary derived considerable property in money and land. This happened, in all probability, before her marriage with John Shakspeare, inasmuch as she is described in the will merely as 'my youngest daughter Mary,' without any additional distinction.

To this marriage between John Shakspeare and Mary Arden (a gentle name, as it has been truly

called), we owe the birth of our great poet. He was born in, or shortly previous to, the month of April, 1564, and, with all his family, providentially escaped the plague, which broke out soon afterwards in the town of Stratford, and committed extensive ravages amongst the inhabitants of the place.

In 1568, John Shakspeare became bailiff of Stratford. In 1569, he obtained a grant of arms from Robert Cooke, the Clarencieux of the time; and this (having been lost) was confirmed by Dethick, Garter-King-at-Arms, and Camden (then Clarencieux), in 1599. All these things speak for the respectability of position occupied by our poet's father; and the circumstance of his mortgaging his wife's estate, in the interval between the two grants (1578), seems to detract little or nothing from such an inference.

The arms thus granted had reference to the family name, Shakspeare; and appear, indeed, rather to have been confirmed than to have originated in the grant of 1569; for the preamble to the license of 1599, which describes John Shakspeare as a 'gentlemen' of Stratford, refers also to his 'parent and great-grandfather' as having done 'faithful and approved service' to King Henry VII.; and assigns that circumstance, together with his marriage with the daughter, and one of the heirs, of Robert Arden, and his production of 'this his *ancient* coat of arms,' as so many reasons for the grant. Thenceforward, the arms of Shakspeare — 'Gould, on a bend sable; and a speare of the first, the point steeled, proper,' — were quartered with the arms of Arden.

Beyond this, the paternal ancestry of Shakspeare is unknown. There is little doubt, however, but that he

had a martial origin. The name shows that it was, in the first instance, won and worn by an able soldier; perhaps by some obscure hero, who perilled his life, in field or foray, for a king or chieftain now as obscure as himself; one of the many millions who have had courage, skill, and fidelity, for their portion; but, wanting an historian, have sunk, without mark, into the oblivious abysses of Time.

§ 3.

In 1574, some houses in Henley-street, Stratford, were purchased by John Shakspeare; and in 1578, he mortgaged his wife's estate, as has been stated. It seems that the mortgagee was let into possession of the land; for, about twenty years afterwards, a suit in equity was instituted by John Shakspeare, for redemption or recovery of the mortgaged property. This mortgage has been adduced as presumptive proof of the distress of Shakspeare's father, and, thence, of the probability of a want of education in his son. To persons acquainted with transactions of this nature, nothing can seem more rash than such conclusions, drawn from such imperfect premises. The purchase of houses, in 1574, denotes — if it denotes anything — a superfluity of money in the purchaser — money that, probably, was not then required for the purposes of his trade; and the mortgage, in 1578, shows that the money, which was invested four years before, was again wanted. But, as the houses *were retained*, and descended, with the other landed estate, to his son, it seems quite unlikely that he should have been seriously

impoverished. As to the allegations by John Shakspeare (in the suit) of his own poverty, and of the frauds practised by the person to whom he mortgaged his wife's estate, they may be classed amongst the many fictions of the law. If all the allegations contained in bills in equity were to be taken for granted, the defendants (who, according to the plaintiffs' statements, are always in the wrong), would present such a body of fraud, conspiracy, and oppression, as never was equalled in any civilized country.

- To reconcile all the doings of the person or persons bearing the name of John Shakspeare with each other—for there were several John Shaksperes at Stratford—would be a difficult task, and, as it appears to me, an unnecessary one. It is safer to proceed upon facts which, to use a species of pleonasm, are well authenticated. It is certain that John Shakspeare, the poet's father, was a person holding a respectable position in society; that he married the daughter of an ancient house; that he was himself entitled to a coat of arms, acquired originally by services to the country; that with his wife he obtained a landed estate; that he purchased other landed property out of his own money; that he rose to such dignities as his native town offered; and, finally, that the estates which he purchased and acquired by marriage became, after his death, the property of his son. It is impossible, in the face of these facts, to argue, with any chance of success, that he was a pauper or insolvent. Both fact and probability weigh strongly against such a presumption. It is more wise, I think, to dismiss the little anecdotes and authorities which have been urged against the solvency of

John Shakspeare, as things which applied to another person of his name ; or, if any of them applied to him, that they could not have shaken his station in life, or have affected him, otherwise than for a short time, and then in a very trivial degree.

There can be small doubt but that our poet had as good an education as the town of Stratford afforded ; and that the learning or accomplishments, in Latin and otherwise, which tradesmen in Stratford possessed, and which they bestowed upon their children, were not withheld from William Shakspeare. It has been ascertained, that the intercourse between children and their parents (aldermen or tradesmen of Stratford), and also between some of the tradesmen themselves, on matters of business, was occasionally carried on by Latin letters and communications. Is it in the least likely, that Shakspeare, the son of the principal officer of the town, and the inheritor of a valuable estate, should be wanting in an equal amount of learning ? Is it possible that, with the same opportunities, the author of 'TROILUS AND CRESSIDA,' of 'ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA,' of 'JULIUS CÆSAR,' of 'CORIOLANUS,' should have passed his youth in sloth and unlettered ignorance ? To come to such an opinion, we must suppose that the eager aptitude of the man had never disclosed itself in the boy ; and, in effect, that the great genius of Shakspeare had never felt the restlessness or impulses which are an integral part of genius, but had slumbered in utter idleness throughout the whole interval of boyhood. Ben Jonson's reference to his 'little Latin and less Greek,' shows that he *knew* both Latin and Greek ; and so far as it is disparaging, must be understood to

speaking by way of comparison, between the mere word-learning of Shakspeare, and that of himself (Jonson) and other ripe scholars of the time. In all that was essential, whether it related to the people of Rome or Greece, Shakspeare undoubtedly knew infinitely more than 'rare Ben Jonson' himself, or probably any of his cotemporaries.

§ 4.

Leaving the question of our poet's education and learning to be canvassed by the more curious, I proceed, and find that, towards the close of the year 1582, being then about eighteen years and seven months old, he intermarried with Ann Hathaway, a 'maiden of Stratford,' who, if the inscription on her tomb be correct, was his elder by eight years. Soon after the marriage, namely, on the 26th of May, 1583, Susanna, their eldest child, was baptized; and on the 2d of February, 1585, their son and daughter, Hamnet and Judith. It appears by the register that Hamnet was buried on the 11th of August, 1596, and thereupon Susanna and Judith, the poet's two daughters, became his co-heiresses.

Susanna, the eldest child of Shakspeare, married John Hall, gentleman (who was a physician of Stratford), on the 5th of June, 1607, she being then thirty-four years of age; and Judith, the younger daughter, married Thomas Queeny on the 10th of February, 1616, about two months only before the death of her father. The wife of Shakspeare, as it is supposed, survived him; for on the 6th of August, 1623, there appears on the regis-

ter the burial of 'Mrs. Shakspere, widow,' who must then have been sixty-seven years old, her illustrious husband dying at the early age of fifty-two. His will, a copy of which follows this introductory essay, appears to have been made about a month after his daughter Judith's marriage, and to have preceded by a month only his own death; the approach of which, in all probability, then became visible to him.

It does not appear that the poet's youngest daughter left any issue; but there was one child of Susanna, named Elizabeth, who married Thomas Nash, Esq., and who herself had a daughter, afterwards the wife of Sir Reginald Forster; from which last-mentioned marriage there appears to have been a descent through two generations. The family of Shakspere, however, in the lineal direction, is now extinct.

Various conjectures have been formed as to the mode in which Shakspere was employed, previously and subsequently to his marriage; as to how he was enabled to maintain his wife and children; as to the motives that induced him to quit Stratford for London, and other circumstances very desirable to know; but all which have hitherto been diligently sought for in vain. He may have been a schoolmaster or scrivener, as has been suggested; but I shall not add to the many ingenious hypotheses that have been started, by any idle speculations of my own. It is clear that it was his destiny. Whether impelled, outwardly or ostensibly, by the persecution of others, or by his own misfortunes or discontent, is an inquiry not very important. It was his destiny; the inner call of his genius, which bade him seek its proper development; which drew him, by its

mysterious influence, from the solitudes where Nature is dumb, into the teeming city, — into those crowds and throngs of men from whom he learned so much ; and to whom, and to whose posterity, he taught all that we see written down in that volume which has no likeness, called, ‘THE WORKS OF SHAKSPERE.’

The story of the deer-stealing, and of the prosecution of our poet by Sir Thomas Lucy, rests on too uncertain a foundation to render it necessary to do more than simply advert to it. That he may have taken part in any of the ordinary frolics of the time, is likely enough ; but whether that was the cause which ‘drove’ him to London, or whether, in fact, he was driven there at all, is beyond the power of any one at present to certify. It is generally thought that Shakspeare quitted Warwickshire for London about 1586 or 1587 ; but in 1589 he was one of the proprietors of the Blackfriars Theatre, a fact that seems to indicate an earlier arrival in the metropolis than is usually supposed. It is not very probable that a youth who left Stratford in 1587 (whether to evade the pursuit of justice or not, but at all events) with small or no pecuniary resources, and with the burden of a wife and children upon him, should, in the space of about a couple of years, become a joint proprietor of one of the principal theatres in London.

His position at the theatre, as proprietor, in 1589, therefore, seems to indicate that he must then have been a considerable period in London ; and not only this, but also that he must then have been, for a considerable time, a writer for the stage. What, in fact, could have renovated his fortunes, and raised him to

the dignity of proprietor, but the aid that he had given to the drama? His earliest work, according to his own account 'the first heir of his invention,' was the poem of 'VENUS AND ADONIS.' That was printed for the first time in 1593: but he was then the friend of Lord Southampton, who was the friend of genius. How had he manifested his genius and acquired his friendship, which did both so much honor, before 1593, unless by the dramas which he had without doubt at that time created? The fact of there having been none of his plays in print at that period proves nothing. There is, according to the opinion of critics, an evident and a very invidious allusion to him, as actor and dramatist, in Robert Green's 'GROATSWORTH OF WIT,' written in or before the year 1592; so that he was then well known as a writer of plays. The omission of Shakspeare's name in Harrington's 'APOLOGIE FOR POETRY,' published in 1590-1, proves not that Shakspeare had not then written, but simply that Harrington either preferred the plays of Lord Buckhurst and others, or that he was unaware of the dramas of Shakspeare, or of their merit. If the plays of our author were not (as they appear to have been) in print at that period, the fact of Harrington having omitted to speak of the excellence of works that he had had no opportunity of reading, seems to be sufficiently accounted for.

§ 5.

On the arrival of Shakspeare in London, it is generally supposed that he resorted to the stage for employment; commencing, probably, as actor, for it is certain

that he was an actor during part of his sojourn; and producing afterwards, from time to time, his marvellous plays.

It has been discovered that, in 1596, he lived near the Bear Garden, in Southwark, his residence being also in the neighborhood of the theatre to which he was attached, and that in 1609 he occupied a good house within the liberty of the Clink. It would appear that he remained in London till about the year 1611; not longer, for in March, 1612, he is described as 'of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman,' in a deed by which a house in Blackfriars, which he had purchased, was conveyed to him by one Henry Walker. During his residence in London, however, he made occasional visits to Stratford, in the course of which he was accustomed to stop at the Crown Inn, at Oxford, at that time kept by one John Davenant; and it is tolerably certain that he became, in 1606, the godfather of Davenant's son, afterwards known as Sir William Davenant, the poet. Previously to this, he had acquired the friendship of Lord Southampton, and of Lord Pembroke; had, in 1598, been admitted to an intimacy with Ben Jonson; and had associated generally with the wits and writers of the age. It was at the Mermaid, then a tavern of note in Fleet Street, that Shakspeare, Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, and other social men of genius were wont to congregate; and there* it was, that those lively

* The following is Fuller's account of Shakspeare, in his 'WORTHIES OF ENGLAND:': 'He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, *poeta non fit, sed nascitur*: one is not made but born a poet.' Many were the wit combats betwixt him and Ben Jonson, which two I behold like a Spanish great

interchanges of wit and vivacity, those 'wit combats,' which we are told of, occurred between Ben and Shakspeare. Amongst other persons he was acquainted with Alleyn, the founder of Dulwich College, and during that person's absence in the country, was in the habit of visiting his wife, who remained in London. In one of her letters to her absent husband, she informs him that a certain Mr. Francis Chalonier had endeavored to borrow ten pounds; but that 'Mr. Shakspeare, of the Globe, who came * * * said he knew him not, only he heard of him that he was a roge, so he was glad we did not lend him the money.' This is the only real anecdote that we possess of Shakspeare during his London residence. Amongst other acquisitions of this period, not to be forgotten, our poet obtained the approbation of Queen Elizabeth, before whom some of his plays were performed, and who is said to have 'appreciated his genius.' There is no evidence that

'She showered her bounties on him, like the Hours,'

or, in fact, that she rewarded him with anything more solid than her smiles; a cheap mode of remunerating genius, but which, to the credit of that age, was not then common with persons of illustrious rank.

That Shakspeare was loved as well as admired by many of his cotemporaries, is well authenticated. Ben

galleon and an English man of war. Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning; solid, but slow in his performances. Shakspeare, like an English man of war, lesser in bulk but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.'

Jonson (a warm hearted man, as well as a sterling writer) declares, 'I do love the man and honor his memory, on this side of idolatry, as much as any : he was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature ;' and the editors of the folio edition of the plays, say that they have collected them 'to keep the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive, as was our Shakspeare.' Whether the poet was beloved by any one of the opposite sex, remains a mystery. From the tenor of some of his sonnets, there is reason to suppose that he attached himself to some female, and that he was ill requited.

A few years ago some papers were written on this obscure subject, entitled, if I remember rightly, 'The Confessions of Shakspeare.' They were made out, with great ingenuity, from the 'SONNETS' alone ; combining and consolidating the several parts of each into one (as it were) authentic narrative. And, indeed, as one travels through these records of the great poet's feelings, a dim and shadowy History seems to rise and disclose itself before us : an intimation not to be neglected, seeing that such a man, however entangled amongst the conceits and fancies of his age, would hardly, in his own person, have wasted such sad and passionate verses on any subject that had no foundation in truth.

On quitting London, Shakspeare retired to his native town of Stratford. He had previously purchased one of the best houses there, called 'New Place,' and in this house he lived and died. He was buried on the 25th of April, 1616, on the north side of the chancel of the great church of Stratford. A monument was shortly afterwards — certainly before the year 1623 — erected

to his memory. The artist has represented him in a sitting posture, with a pen in his right hand, and his left resting on a scroll of paper; and on the cushion which appears spread out before him, are engraved the following lines :

‘ *Judicio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,
Terra tegit, populus mœret, Olympus habet.*’

Not much can be said of this monument as a work of art: it is poor enough. And yet to this tomb, and to the house wherein he (is supposed to have) lived and died, how many thousand pilgrims have since come! Here, people of all ages and all nations have repaired, for upwards of two hundred years. Walls covered with inscriptions (each man eager to write down his admiration) attest the worth and influence of a great poet. It would have been creditable to this country, or to its government, if some fit memorial, in bronze or marble, had been built up in his honor. For, although (as Milton sings)

‘ *What, needs my Shakspeare for his honored bones,
The labor of an age in pilèd stones?
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid
Under a star-y pointing pyramid?*’

yet that does not exonerate us from paying the tribute due to his memory; however it may account for the abundance of statues which we have erected, in the vain hope of immortalizing people who have shed neither glory nor light of any sort upon the English nation.

§ 6.

As part of the biography of Shakspeare, it would have been very desirable to have ascertained the order in which his plays were written. It would have exhibited the gradations, and, perhaps, fluctuations, of his intellect, and have cast light on many questions of great interest relating to the works themselves; but, unfortunately, this must still remain doubtful. The subject has been frequently discussed; and trifling facts have from time to time arisen, proving that certain plays had been actually performed when, as was once supposed, they existed only in the imagination of the author. But nothing like satisfactory evidence has been produced to show at what precise time any one play was written. We know that some plays were printed, and that others were represented, in certain years. But we do *not* know how long before those years these dramas were actually composed, nor whether other plays, which were made public at a later date, were not then in existence.

For my own part, I think that, in determining the chronology as well as the authenticity of Shakspeare's plays, there is, after all, no evidence like the internal evidence; no proof like the plays themselves. Other proofs may be, and have, in similar cases, repeatedly been found fallacious. But there is no retrograding in point of style; no going back from the style of vigorous manhood, or even the neatness and fastidiousness of later life, to the loose, unsettled character which invariably betrays the youthful writer. A date may be incorrectly given; a report may be without foundation;

a second edition may be mistaken for a first; and the work which is published to-day, may, in manuscript, have many predecessors. In Shakspeare's case, the doubts are so strong and numerous, that we are thrown back altogether upon conjecture. Had the great author, indeed, left anything which could have enabled us to unravel the mystery, the question might have assumed another aspect; but, in the absence of all information from himself, we cannot do better, as I have said, than consult his works.

The principal point of interest is as to those *plays* with which he commenced his labors; for we have his own acknowledgment, that 'the first fruit of his invention' was the *poem* of 'VENUS AND ADONIS.' If it could be satisfactorily ascertained that 'TITUS ANDRONICUS' and the First Part of 'HENRY THE SIXTH' were written by him, I should be disposed to place them at the commencement of the list. But I doubt their authenticity; and I altogether disbelieve all reports and dissent from all opinions which aim at fathering upon him 'SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE,' 'THOMAS, LORD CROMWELL,' and 'THE YORKSHIRE TRAGEDY.' They are decidedly spurious: and the circumstance of Schlegel having pronounced his deliberate conviction that those wretched performances 'unquestionably' belonged to Shakspeare, — nay, that they 'are amongst his best and maturest works,' — is almost enough to beget a doubt as to the originality of some of his own critical opinions.

'TITUS ANDRONICUS,' the First Part of 'HENRY THE SIXTH,' and 'PERICLES,' are said to contain passages which show, beyond all question, that Shakspeare was

their author. But short passages, having the stamp of Shakspeare, prove no more than that he occasionally retouched and invigorated the dramas that came before him ; a circumstance which is by no means improbable. In respect to 'PERICLES,' I think, from a careful reading of the play, that the three last acts were undoubtedly written by Shakspeare. No other man could write in the same style, or in a style so good. The two first acts are, indeed, very unlike his composition ; and there is something in the early part of the plot that, I suspect, never originated in his invention. 'TITUS ANDRONICUS' and the First Part of 'HENRY THE SIXTH,' are in a different predicament. In the more material qualities of a play, — in character, in plot, in spirited intelligent dialogue, — these two dramas are deficient. Talbot (in the latter play) is a bold sketch, and the scene between him and the Countess of Auvergne, is striking and dramatic ; but, in the main, the *dramatis personæ* differ but little from each other, whilst the level style of the verse, and the brutal treatment of the Maid of Orleans at the close, betray, as it seems to me, the hand of an inferior dramatist. However Shakspeare may have yielded to the national prejudices of his age, he was too noble and humane to have attempted to justify upon the stage that most atrocious tragedy, in which the English barbarians of the time consummated their renown, by burning to death an enemy who was at once a woman and their prisoner. Amongst the ineradicable stains upon the arms of England (small and few in number, I trust), this diabolical act of the murder of the Maid of Orleans stands out blackest and unparalleled.

In regard to 'TITUS ANDRONICUS,' it has always appeared to me to have issued from the same mint, and to bear the same stamp as 'LUST'S DOMINION,' which is known to have been produced by Marlowe. With the exception of one beautiful passage, there is the same style of verse (totally unlike that adopted in Shakspeare's known plays), the same exaggeration and confusion of character, the same mock (with occasional real) sublimity, which the tragedies of Marlowe present; and, above all, the same villanous ferocity and blood-thirstiness which Marlowe delighted to indulge in, and which Shakspeare's far-sighted genius altogether disdained. Marlowe (although he has fine and even grand bursts of poetry) stands forth, the historian of lust and villany, and the demonstrator of physical power; while Shakspeare is ever the champion of humanity and intellect.

If the two last mentioned plays may, contrary to my expectation, claim Shakspeare for their author, then I think that they must have been the earliest of his dramatic productions; and, in all probability, the Second and Third parts of 'HENRY THE SIXTH' speedily followed; for the style throughout is like that of Marlowe, although those 'parts' present more subtle and numerous distinctions of character than that dramatist has ever drawn.

About this time Shakspeare must have begun to assume an independent style in his plays; and now, I imagine, he composed the 'TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.' This play has, in all respects, a youthful character, and it is undoubtedly his. Almost all the similes and sentiments have reference to love, without

the intermixture of weightier matter. The metre is wanting in pliancy and sinew ; but the occasional sententious lines, the play upon words, the style and quality of the comedy, with its jokes dovetailed and full of retorts, all point him out as the author. It is a slight play compared with many others of later date ; but there is a passion and freshness in it, as though it had been breathed forth in that time of year when April

‘ Had put a spirit of youth in everything.’

Perhaps ‘ LOVE’S LABOR’S LOST ’ was played next. It is a decided advance in power, in style, and even in dramatic skill. With the exception of Launce (in whom the germ of much that afterwards blossomed out is obvious), and, perhaps, of Julia, there is little of character in the ‘ TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.’ But Biron and Rosaline, Boyet, Armado and his page, Moth (‘ that handful of wit ’), Holofernes, and Costard, are all clear outlines, although all of them may not be very strong. And some of the poetry in this play is, as mere poetry, equal to that of Shakspeare’s maturer time. The aphorism

‘ A jest’s prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it,’

is profound and Shaksperian. The play itself looks as though it rested on some event in the history of Provence, in times when the Troubadours figured in the solemn masquerades of Love. The two principal characters, Biron and Rosaline, were afterwards recast by Shakspeare, with some alterations, and appear under the names of Benedick and Beatrice.

In what order the rest of the plays followed, at what period the greatest dramas were produced, and what was the final work of this unequalled poet, I will not pretend to guess. As a general principle, however, I would say, that the plays in which signs of imitation (particularly imitation of style) are manifest, should be accounted the earliest; and that those wherein the poetry is redundant and far exceeds the necessities and purposes of the story, should be held to have preceded, in point of time, the great and substantial dramas, in which the business of the play is skilfully wrought out, and where the poetry springs out of the passion or humor of the characters, and serves to illustrate and not to oppress them. In conformity with this view, I think that the 'WINTER'S TALE,' although perhaps not actually performed until the year 1611, can never have been the last work of Shakspeare. It is far more like the labor of his youth. That the 'TEMPEST' should have been the last play is far less unlikely; and I would fain connect it, if possible, with his farewell to the stage, were it only for those beautiful and melancholy words of Prospero, with which *he* (another enchanter) abandons his 'so potent art:'

'This rough magic

I here abjure; and, when I have required
Some heavenly music (which even now I do),
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And, deeper than did ever plummet sound,
I'll drown my book.'

PART II.

§ 1.

WHATEVER doubts may exist concerning the parentage or education of Shakspeare ;—concerning his residence, his mode of life, his progress from poverty to wealth ; or concerning the order of his dramas, showing thereby his ascension from the immaturity of boyhood, to that full perfection of mind which he afterwards attained ; there can be none as to the quality of his intellect, nor, in my opinion, as to the vast benefits which he conferred upon the world.

Poetry, the material in which Shakspeare dealt, has been treated often as a superfluity — as a thing unimportant to mankind, and as a luxury against which sumptuary laws might be fairly levelled. This is the opinion of men of literal understanding, who, seeing no merit in poetry because it differs from science, and overlooking its logic, which is involved instead of being demonstrated, pronounce at once against it. It is more especially an opinion of the present age ; an age in which the material world has been searched and ransacked to supply new powers and luxuries to man ; and in which the moral world has been too much neglected.

We do not encourage the poet ; but we encourage the chemist and the miner, the capitalist, the manufacturer. We encourage voyagers, who penetrate the forests of Mexico, the South Indian pampas, and the sterile tracts of Africa beyond the mountains of the moon. These people tell us of new objects of commerce ; they bring us tidings of unknown lands. Yet, what a vast unexplored world lies about us ! what a dominion, beyond the reach of any traveller — beyond the strength of the steam-engine — nay, even beyond the power of material light itself to penetrate — is there to be attained in that region of the brain ! Much have the poets won, from time to time, out of that deep obscure. Homer has bequeathed to us his discoveries, and Dante also, and our greater Shakspeare. They are the same now, as valuable now, as on the day whereon they were made. In our earth, all is for ever changing. One traveller visits a near or a distant country ; he sees traces (temples or monuments) of human power ; but unforeseen events, earthquake or tempest, obliterate them ; or the people who dwelt near them migrate ; the eternal forest grows round and hides them ; or they are left to perish, for the sake of a new artist, whose labors are effaced in their turn. And so goes on the continual change, the continual decay. Governments and systems change ; codes of law, theories philosophical, arts in war, demonstrations in physics. [Everything perishes except Truth, and the worship of Truth, and Poetry which is its enduring language.]

And now, when I am about to speak of some of the great qualities of Shakspeare, I do not propose to be very critical. It is better to approach him with, as I think

Mr. Coleridge has suggested, an 'affectionate reverence.' It is safer to err on the side of too much respect. I am unwilling to discuss, at length, his (so called) want of utility, or his morality, or his historical, geographical, or verbal errors; some of which last may be ascribed to the age he lived in, whilst others may be safely placed to the account of interpolators or transcribers of his plays. Besides, our poet deals with subjects so many and so various, and he is of so high an intellect, that I dare not venture to speak of him as of any other writer. He has been denounced lately, I hear, as an offender against letters; stripped and hacked and scarified, to satisfy the bad humor of some very unenviable person. I have forborne to read this libel against the greatest man that the world has produced, being already sufficiently acquainted with the freedom of preceding critics.

The flattery or good-nature of these writers (now an important body) has done but little harm. No book can live and take its permanent place, unless it has in itself the seeds of vitality. But the injury which literature suffers from dishonest, malignant criticism, is very great. It is true that a commanding genius is not to be repressed by malevolence or envy: and it is true, perhaps, that merit of every order will make its way in the end, and secure its due reputation. But, in the meantime, we, the cotemporaries, are defrauded of the fruits gathered in for us; and the laborer is cheated of his hire. Readers of books are for the most part an indolent race. They prefer taking the opinions of the present or last generation, to searching for those which are a century old. In fact, men associate

themselves insensibly with the people of their age. Their habits, including even the habit of thinking, run very much in the same current. An original thinker will indeed accept nothing upon hearsay; he will investigate and judge for himself. But the rank and file of men hug an error to their souls; repeat and propagate it, till even truth is for a time discomfited. The fact is, that fame sometimes depends upon a happy conjunction of influences. Not only Pallas and Apollo, but Jove and Mercury also, must assemble and determine the point. The old dramatists of England lay inhumed, without mark or epitaph, for 170 years. At last, a clerk in the India House, whose taste led him to ponder over ancient books, pierced the darkness in which they lay, and saw their value. It was as though a diver, suddenly let down in some remote spot of the ocean, had beheld these 'sumless wrecks and sunken treasures,' and had brought up wealth inexhaustible, rich gems, and gold, and antique ornaments, — for ages neglected or forgotten.

Shakspere himself has suffered, in his time, from commentators and critics, foreign and domestic. The opinions of Voltaire, even now, interfere with the progress of his fame in France. Our great poet, however, has, by dint of his irrepressible power, risen above all ordinary impediments which beset the course of authors,

‘Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,’

and has taken his station at the head of all. In this country, at least, he requires no defender; scarcely, indeed, an expounder of his meaning, notwithstanding

the change that our language has undergone since his time. All that is left is to have some discretion in our worship; to enumerate some of his qualities; to reckon up, as far as space and one own's ability will permit, the good deeds that he has done: and thus leave him — in a new shape — tended and decorated by a new artist, his characters drawn out by the pencil, and many of his delicate fancies (as I think) delicately handled, to take his chance with the English public.

§ 2.

And here, it may be well to advert to some of the points on which others have already spoken. Amongst other titles to respect, Shakspeare has been styled the originator of our 'romantic Drama.' This phrase conveys a very erroneous, for it conveys a very insufficient, idea of what he did, even for the Drama. The word 'romantic,' either in its old signification (of 'wild,' or 'improbable'), or coupled with its recent and more ludicrous associations, is, to the last degree, disparaging and untrue, as applied to him. (That he pursued the lofty, the heroic, and the supernatural, and subdued them to his use, is well known; but probability and truth are the very qualities by which he is distinguishable, above all other writers. Taking the outline of his stories for granted (a necessary postulate), his plots are admirably managed; and his characters are absolutely living people; true in the antique time, true in his own, and true in ours:

'Age cannot wither them, nor custom stale
Their infinite variety.'

To know what Shakspeare achieved, it is only necessary to look at the previous history of the stage. Before his time, the drama was a narrow region. With the single exception of the Greek drama, it bore no comparison, in any country, with the other departments of national literature. And even in Greece, as elsewhere, the drama was cramped and limited in its very nature. It did not extend beyond its own history, or superstitions; it dealt with a single event that was familiar to all, and in which the whole course of the story was visible from the outset to the end. It embodied the anger of Jove, the power of remorse, the pains and penalties of sinful or presumptuous men: or it reflected the distorted humors or singularities of the time, after the fashion of a farce or a satire. This was the case throughout all antiquity.

In our own rude beginnings, the same meagreness of outline and poverty of character prevailed; without any of the grandeur of thought, or beauty of language, which distinguished the drama of Athens. As *Æschylus* had given to the ancients, Diana and Apollo, Strength, Force, and the Furies; so the English Mysteries and Moralities presented to our forefathers Knowledge, and Good Council, and Death, and Sathan the Devil, and the rest. The names of such personages sufficiently announce their errands, and show that the object of these little dramas was simply didactic. They conveyed moral and religious lessons to communities who were unacquainted with books; and possessed, we may imagine, some extrinsic attractions, which drew together spectators and auditors whom the homilies of the ecclesiastics had failed to collect.

The growing intelligence of the public could not, however, long rest content with these inartificial dramas; and accordingly Tragedy and Comedy began, simultaneously, about the time of the birth of Shakspeare, to manifest themselves in more regular shapes upon the English stage. This dawn announced a coming day. Yet, there is nothing in this period, except the plays of Marlowe, that need detain us; although Peele has sweet and flowing lines, and Lily some charming passages, in which he has revived all the romance and more than the sentiment of the ancient Grecian fables. Marlowe was the only great precursor of Shakspeare. He was far from a perfect dramatist. His characters are defective in discrimination, in delicacy, and in truth. Nevertheless, he was a daring and powerful writer, and his 'mighty line' is known, by reputation at least, to all readers of English literature. Some of his thoughts and images are not unworthy of Shakspeare himself. The well-known lines —

' Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burned the topless towers of Ilium ?'

may be referred to as a fine instance of imagination. His bold, reckless heroes, however, are carried to the very limits of extravagance, and his women are extravagant also, or without mark. He is altogether of the earth, earthy: he riots in the sensual and diabolical, and ~~tramples~~ tramples down all probabilities. And yet, amidst all this, are interspersed proud and heroic thoughts, classical allusions, harmonious cadences, that elevate and redeem his dramas from, otherwise, inevitable disgust. For some of these faults Marlowe was himself

answerable, but many of them may be fairly ascribed to the barbarism of his age.

§ 3.

Such was the state of things when Shakspeare came ; the good Genius who brought health and truth, and light and life, into the English drama ; who extended its limits to the extremity of the earth, nay, into the air itself ; and peopled the regions which he traversed, with beings of every shape, and hue, and quality, that experience or the imagination of a great poet could suggest.

The benefits which Shakspeare bestowed upon the stage may possibly be readily admitted, although the precise nature of those benefits must, by most readers, be taken upon trust. But the *full* importance of his writings to the land he lived in will never, perhaps, be generally understood. Their effect can scarcely be exaggerated. The national intellect is continually recurring to them for renovation and increase of power :

‘ As to their fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light.’

They are a perpetual preservative against false taste and false notions. Their great author is the true reformer. He stands midway between the proud aristocracy of rank and wealth, and that ‘ fierce democratic ’ which would overwhelm all things in its whirl ; a true philosopher ; a magician more potent than his own Prospero, and never otherwise than beneficent and wise.

There is no part of the drama which he did not amend. Until his time (for Marlowe's tragedy is merely speckled and bespotted by vulgar farce) the grave and the comic were never permitted to unite. Tragedy was barred out from Comedy by some traditional law. The picture presented was either gloomy and without relief, or it was trivial and jocose, wanting in depth and stability. The true aspect of human nature, therefore, which is various and always changing, had never been seen upon the stage. Instead thereof, a mask, hideous or grotesque, as the case might be, but always inflexible, was exhibited for our edification or amusement; and we were taught to laugh only with people who could never be serious, or to sympathize with heroes to whom it would be derogatory to smile. This defect, a defect under which the great Athenian dramas labor, Shakspeare remedied; not by engrafting temporary jests or fleeting fashions upon the enduring form of tragedy, but by blending and interweaving humors which are common to all men, with the passions that are also common to all. The humors and jealousies, and vanities of Illyria, of Egypt, of Greece, of Rome, of the Isle of Prosper, of the Forest of Arden, — are they not such as we encounter in England every day?

The quality of Shakspeare's mind was precisely such as is required to form a great dramatist; for he was not only absolutely free from egotism and vanity, but, joined to an intellect of the very first order, he possessed an affection or sympathy that embraced all things.

No vain man, and, as I believe, no bad man, can

ever become a great dramatist. [First, throughout the entire play he must altogether forget himself.] His characters must have no taint or touch of his own peculiar opinions. He must forget his own humors; he must forbear to manifest his own weakness; he must banish his own sentiments on every subject within the range of the play. He must understand exactly how nature operates on every constitution of mind, and under every accident; and let his *dramatis personæ* speak and act accordingly. And, secondly, he must have a heart capable of sympathizing with all; with the hero and the coward; with the jealous man and the ambitious man; the lover and the despiser of love; with the Roman matron, the budding Italian girl, the tender and constant English wife; [with people of all ranks, and ages, and humors, however widely they may differ from himself.] It has been said that this power of depicting and appearing to sympathize with every passion, is, in fact, part of the intellect itself. If so, it has surely its source in the affections. And, indeed, I have always thought that a large portion of what we know and what we are apt to ascribe solely to observation, is in effect derived through the heart. The thousand little weaknesses, and troubles, and fluctuations, which the dramatic writer lays before us, are learned in great part from his own nature. It is the sympathy he feels for the character he creates, as well as the knowledge that he gains from the observation of such character, that enables him to paint human nature truly. No scrutiny, however minute or extended, and no power of mere intellect (meaning thereby reasoning only, or the imagination so far as it rests upon reason), could enable

any author to detect the many little processes of the mind, the traits of humor and the affections, which Shakspeare has set forth. It is certain that, till his time, no man ever knew or could learn so much of the various good qualities and infirmities of human nature, as one may now learn from the mere study of his plays. No writer before his time ever mingled and made common cause, as it were, with people of all conditions. He was 'one of the many.' He did not set himself above the herd, and deal out oracular maxims and apothegms; but allowed and prompted every one to speak as Nature dictated. In a word, he evidently sympathized with all men; and, showing this, he begat sympathy in his hearers. It is not the display of intellect on abstract subjects, nor the moral dogma, nor sententious wisdom in any shape, nor even the cunning analysis of character, so much as the power of attracting the sympathy of an audience, that commands success.

The judgment of Shakspeare was on a level with his intellect. There is no dramatist who approaches him in this respect. Ben Jonson, one of the most scientific of designers, is far below him in all that relates to the more important parts and real constitution of a play. The conduct of his plots is generally admirable, and the conduct of his *dramatis personæ* absolutely faultless. There is no playing at cross purposes, no confusion. Everything is in due order, in due subordination. There are many voices, but they are 'matched in mouth like bells,' each under each. In the construction of a drama, the dovetailing of the scenes, or even the probability of the story, is not of the highest moment. It is the entire harmony of the play, its completeness

within itself (the story or premises being admitted), that constitutes its main charm and merit: it is, in fact, the relation which one character bears to another; the due blending of thoughts and incidents; one voice answering to another; one thought or event following another, like the consequence the cause; no object standing out, staring without meaning, disjointed, unallied to the rest; but all rounded off, classed, arranged: the light deepening into shadow, the darkness gradually emerging into light.

§ 4.

In regard to the characters drawn by Shakspeare, I do not recollect one in his undoubted dramas, that is not at once true, consistent, and complete. Our great poet never squares or clips a character to suit any preconceived theory; but permits each to do his best (or worst) as nature or education may inspire. 'Accommodate,' he says, 'is a good word;' but to accommodate or remould nature in order to fit a theory or demonstrate a problem, is a sacrifice of truth to conjecture; and Shakspeare in essentials never sacrificed truth. Fault has been found with the construction of some of his plays — as with the 'WINTER'S TALE,' for instance, or the fairy dramas — for doing violence to probability or the unities; but let the characters upon whom he has set his stamp once appear, and I defy the critic not to admit that every one is wrought out of the true metal. Not one of them is a mask, or a voice, or a chorus; but a man complete. The words he utters belong to himself, and to no one besides. Even the change

which we observe to take place in some of his dramatic personages, is one of the strongest proofs of their completeness and truth. That fluctuation which to an ordinary writer might seem to be a deviation from character, he knew to be one of its constituent parts: for the condition of man is complex and various. He is not built up by nature as a case or sounding-board for one particular note, grave or sharp; but for the whole diapason. To draw a character who shall stand up as the stiff representative of a single virtue, is to betray a woful ignorance of humanity. The virtues, as well as the vices, of man never come singly, but in troops. They abide with us, perhaps, but they are not rigid or inflexible. On the contrary, they change and are modified by many causes. The brave man of to-day may, like Macbeth, be a coward to-morrow; and the nerves of a Richard, who was yesterday foremost in the battle, may to-day be shaken by a dream.

In the mechanical drama (so to speak) — in that which is formed without flexibility or variety in the characters or verse, like some of the French tragedies — there is a regular progress of puppets from the beginning to the end; the same voice of the same ventriloquist guiding them on, without fluctuation or pause. Nothing disturbs the monotony and weariness of the scene; nothing elevates or depresses the dialogue, which is always in *alt*. One personage is a tyrant, another a lover, a third a warrior, a fourth a friend; and each delivers himself duly of the maxims which belong to the virtue or passion which he is thus engaged to represent. They are all, in short, abstractions, and not men. Now, Shakspeare's characters are not abstrac-

tions, nor are they mere sections of character. They are entire and complete. Neither are they mere characters standing alone or aloof. Each shows the relation he bears to others, and how he is operated upon by them. So Coriolanus, Macbeth, and Othello, exhibit the different phases of their character, according to the light cast upon them by the presence of other persons, or by the predominating passion of the scene. Yet the physical courage and moral weakness of Macbeth, the fierce pride and relenting affection of Coriolanus, the calm command and stormy turbulence of Othello, are qualities naturally linked to each other, and harmonize with each other: as the different events of human life are connected and reconciled by various influences; by time or age, the ingratitude of children, the depression of fortune, or other causes. Sometimes, the greater passions are more completely developed and made manifest by the introduction of trivial objects. And this, which perhaps originated in the wide sympathy of Shakspeare for all men, teaching him to despise none, is at once evidence of his supreme skill. Observe how the brutality of Caliban, and the drunken fooleries of Trinculo and Stephano, throw out in grand relief the grave majesty of Prospero, and contrast with the fresh simplicity of Miranda. So the stilted verse of the Players gives value to the natural words of Hamlet; and the fripperies of Osrick are effective as a prologue to the tragic duel. The loose Iachimo and vulgar Cloten make us look with double respect on the chaste and lonely Imogen; and the idiotic merriment of the Fool (strangely weighted and kept down by a sort of instinctive wisdom or shrewdness) brings out the mad

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ness and sublimity of Lear ; acting, by contrast, like a little light, which develops the darkness of the region around.

How Shakspeare arrived at his conclusions, and mastered the difficulties of character, is a subject that has not yet been fathomed. Perhaps he could not himself have explained it so as to make it intelligible to all. Was it intuition, experience, or meditation, that led to those happy creations which no one has equalled ? He painted, seemingly, partly from individual nature, but not wholly. His characters are not copies of particular men or women, for they have the general qualities which belong to their class. Neither are they abstractions (as we have said) of any vice or virtue, for they sometimes abound with humors and infirmities not often found in company with it. Perhaps he may have sketched from persons whom he had seen, and made up what seemed to be wanting in them, or rather what he had had no opportunity of discovering, out of his knowledge of what belonged to human nature ; or he illustrated certain qualities of the mind which are usually or frequently found together, after studying instances of individual nature.

If Shakspeare ever selected a single passion as the subject for tragedy (which I doubt), he at least qualified it, and forced it to bend to circumstances, to temperament, to education, or other antagonist causes. Moreover, he surrounded its representative with personages of a different order, opposite or subordinate ; and by these means relieved his drama from the bareness and monotony which would otherwise have been inevitable. Thus, Othello is not simply a jealous man, nor is

Macbeth merely ambitious. The first is predisposed for his fate by his tropical birth and his martial calling; the other is by nature easy, speculative, and infirm. In each case, the master-passion is not in the commencement obvious. It is dormant, but capable of being awakened into a power that becomes resistless.

The error of some writers of fiction has been that they have taken a cardinal vice, and severing it from all qualities that might have attended it, have left it single and unsupported, the sole end and object of the play. Others have smoothed down the inequalities of character, for the sake of a noble outline. Sometimes the historian has led the way, and the dramatist has slavishly followed him. Such authors have seen nature through books. Instead of this, they should have looked directly at man himself, examined him, and studied him, as they would a wonder never yet sufficiently known. It is quite clear, that no one can ever become a great dramatist who shall take the world 'upon trust.'

As bearing upon this part of the subject, I may be excused for devoting a paragraph to the question of 'the learning of Shakspeare.' Several writers have perplexed themselves and their readers in endeavoring to ascertain the amount of Shakspeare's learning. In itself, it is a matter inexpressibly unimportant. It is of no importance to us, or to his own fame. Could the precise amount of his learning be weighed out in critical scales (a thing quite impossible), it would neither diminish nor add to his merit. He must rest content, crowned with bays, instead of the doctor's cap.

It is possible, I think, that a man may be encumbered by too much learning: not that he is likely to know

too much either of a language or a people ; but that, together with the advantages which accompany learning, there present themselves too many models for imitation. One cannot read Homer, without admiring his grand and masculine style ; nor Dante, without being impressed by that deep, glowing, intense earnestness which carried him on to the end of his extraordinary task. It is necessary to the performance of an original work that a man should be thrown upon his own resources ; that he should not be beset by the temptation of following in the track of others, whom he cannot but admire, and whom it is so much easier to imitate than surpass. The indolence of human nature is sometimes found allied to its ambition ; and the man who desires fame, or wealth, or power, however he may possess the active principle, sufficient to succeed in any case, is yet ready enough to accomplish his end with as little expense of thought or labor as he can.

It is, I believe, this misfortune (namely, the multitude of models), that impedes the advancement of modern painters. They are oppressed and bewildered by the abundance and magnificence of the Italian schools. They stumble over the statues of antiquity, when they should be taking their way apart, and seeking the true road to the summit of the hill of Fame. Some of the works of the Carracci, of Dominichino, and Guido, are wonderful for color and effect. Yet they always force upon us the conviction that they would not have been what they were, but for the excellence of preceding painters. They would have been worse or better.

Luckily for Shakspeare, although he had some pre-

decessors in the drama, there was no one sufficiently great to induce him to follow in his track. His early and casual imitations of Marlowe were soon abandoned. This was to be expected; for every poet has, I imagine, begun his career by being in some degree an imitator. The scale and alphabet of his art being already existing, he consults and uses them for a short time; casting them away as the consciousness of his own power becomes better known. Thus Shakspeare's genius speedily rose above all aids and entanglements, and showed itself, strong, original, and triumphant. It enabled him to look down upon the Roman times, and upon the age of the Plantagenets, as from a pinnacle. He did not become, as the more learned Jonson did, a transcriber from Cicero, or the Latin classics; but, adopting all that was valuable in historians and orators, he passed beyond them, and surveyed the whole Roman people, from the wars of Coriolanus to the fall of the triumvir, Antony, like one who had the world at his feet, and who set down what he *saw* before him, and not what he had read translated in books.

§ 5.

The plays of Shakspeare appear to divide themselves into certain classes, viz., the Historical Plays (comprising therein the English and Roman histories, and also 'TROILUS AND CRESSIDA,' which is allied to history); the Comedies, and the Tragedies; to which perhaps, may be added a miscellaneous class, consisting of those dramas which are founded on fairy mythology, and

those in which neither tragedy nor comedy can be said to prevail.

In the Historical Plays, one is first struck by the fidelity which Shakspeare has displayed throughout all the scenes (many of them necessarily fictitious) which constitute and complete the story, and the skill with which he has disposed and managed a crowd of characters. The Roman dramas seem to us even more real than the English; but this arises from the circumstance of the former being founded on events which happened in more remote times, thus preventing us from comparing, with the same severity, the sayings and doings of the personages of the play with the manners of actual life. Of all these plays, 'ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA' appears to me to stand the first. For variety of character, for grandeur of thought, for pathos, and tragic situation, and for all the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance,' which give effect to the stage, this may challenge comparison with any other drama. All is in the 'high Roman fashion' — in the most magnificent style of tragedy. Hazlitt has said finely and characteristically (when speaking of it), that Shakspeare's genius has spread over the whole play a richness like the overflowing of the Nile.' Amongst the English historical plays, 'RICHARD THE THIRD' exhibits the most intellectual and commanding character, although it has less variety than some others, and comprises few sentences of great poetical interest.

The Comedies are not mere comedies of manners, which are fleeting, but transcripts of humors, which are lasting and belong to human life. Foremost of these, must be placed the two parts of 'HENRY THE FOURTH,'

in which, however, there is an admixture of the heroic. It is only necessary to refer to these matchless productions, to show the abundance that Shakspeare has poured into them. In the 'Second Part' there are not less than twenty characters, all clearly marked out, and kept entire and distinct throughout the play. It is impossible to confound one with another. The wit of Falstaff (the most remarkable comic creation on record) illustrates both plays; whilst the chivalrous characters of Hotspur and Glendower, the gravity of Henry, the alternate compunction and levity of his son, and the whole bustle and incident of the story, render it, to all classes of auditors, a performance at all times full of interest.

There is no space here to go through the tragic and comic plays *seriatim*, and show their manifold wonders. They are each beyond rivalry in their way: although the tragedy is superior to the comedy, by so much as that which is serious is superior to that which is jocose. This has been already insisted upon by other writers.

But let us not forget the fairy dramas. The 'TEMPEST' and the 'MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM' deserve a better defender than I can hope to be. The supernatural machinery which Shakspeare has adopted in these and other plays has been decried, as being little better than that of nursery fables. This, as it appears to me, is mistaking the quality and object of a play. The supernatural is a legitimate portion of the drama. It is as much so as any circumstance which we are apt to call improbable or unnatural, but which in every instance has been outdone by facts. All depends on the mode of introducing the supernatural,

and on the use made of it by the poet. Whatever affects the imagination, and excites the sympathies of an audience, may be pronounced fit for the stage. It is only when the childish and ignorant are wrought upon, leaving the mature mind unaffected, that the supernatural becomes absurd. It is, in short, the quantity of intellect thrown into fictions of this order, which determines their general fitness to appear before the world. Taking into consideration the mechanism and general exterior of a represented play, *all* plays commence as improbabilities. No one *begins* by being deluded. He knows at the outset that a wooden stage is before him, and that actors are about to represent a fiction. But if, with this indispensable disadvantage, the poet succeeds in exciting the sympathy of the spectator, and makes him for awhile forget the humble appliances of his art, then the drama may be said to be triumphant. In reference to this subject, it should not be forgotten that many characters and effects have been brought upon the stage, which certainly never had any existence in the history of human affairs. These are as essentially opposed to fact as the fairies and ghosts of Shakspeare; and yet we do not object to them, because we say that they are 'natural.' But, are not Titania and Oberon natural? Is not Ariel natural? Is nor Caliban natural? nay, is he not a thousand times more natural and more impressive than the pompous perfections and inflated heroes of the French stage?

I shall not attempt to classify the merits of Shakspeare's tragedies; but, as a comparison has frequently been instituted between the four great tragedies, 'MACBETH,' 'HAMLET,' 'OTHELLO,' and 'LEAR,' I may

venture to recur to them. In 'MACBETH,' it is said, there is an unity of interest, a rapidity of event, and a combination of the human and supernatural, that place it the first, in these respects, in point of excellence. 'LEAR' is more sublime, I think, all human and passionate as it is, and has meanings more profound than the other, and exhibits greater variety and contrast of character. 'HAMLET' beyond the rest developes and lays bare the innermost thoughts and workings of a single mind. But, to my thinking, 'OTHELLO' is the most substantial and complete of all his plays. Less refined than 'Hamlet,' less imaginative than 'MACBETH,' and less terrible and impressive than 'LEAR,' it is, for variety and development of character, more complete than the others. 'MACBETH' is chiefly a tragedy of *events*. There are no characters, except those of Macbeth and his awful wife. Macbeth himself, indeed, is an entire biography; and the 'Lady' is grandly drawn: but otherwise the play (with deep respect be it said) is meagre in character. 'LEAR' — in which we are whirled about by the passion of the scene, as the old discrowned heart-broken king is by the fury of the elements, is more loosely hung together than 'OTHELLO;' and Hamlet, who at first sight appears to be more thoroughly portrayed than any other personage of the stage, will be found, I think, to exhibit his own thoughts, chiefly on abstract and indifferent subjects, rather than to develop his *character*; always the main object in dramatic fiction. In 'OTHELLO,' on the other hand, there are seven characters completely and thoroughly distinguished. There are Brabantio (the model of Priuli), Cassio, Roderigo, Iago,

Emilia, Desdemona, 'the gentle lady married to the Moor,' and finally Othello, the Moor, himself; and to these must be superadded the most absorbing human interest, remarkable variety in the characters, and the most compact and natural story of any within the compass of the English drama. Shakspeare has drawn the Moor with great magnanimity. He has disdained the ordinary notes of preparation, and has gone at once to the main purpose of the play. At first view, nothing appears more unskilful and hopeless than to attempt to extract great interest from Othello. The qualities of the Moor seem precisely those which are opposed to the results which are afterwards so clearly derived from them. What is to be done with a man of extreme simplicity? one who is brave, honest, tranquil, generous, confiding, free from jealousy, ('not easily jealous'), and little else? one whose perilous paths and romantic adventures are already traversed? The period of his wooing (always a great refuge for the dramatist) is over, and he comes quietly before us, without any obvious impediment in his way, from which we can foresee a tragic result. He has been moderate in his attachment; and his love, crowned with success, is a principle rather than a sentiment. It is a manifestation of his opinion, the assent of his mind to the high deserts of his bride, and not a humor, the quality of which is determined by the ebb or flow of his blood. He loved Desdemona, not for her beauty, but for her gentleness, her pity, her virtues. She felt compassion for his toils and dangers; and he 'loved her *that she did pity them.*' His love accordingly is not like common love, which is a wilful passion, subject to all 'the skiey influences,' but is a tranquil,

contented affection. Apparently, it is quite secure; sheltered, by his own nature and her truth, from all accidents. But wait! there is still one point from which it is assailable; and there Shakspeare, in his penetration, has struck. He sees the seeds of trouble in Othello; the 'color burned upon him.' He sees that his tranquillity arises not from temperament but education. He has been transplanted into the camp, and tamed, ever since he was seven years old —

'(Since these arms of mine had seven years' pith),'

by the habits of military obedience. But he is still the son of a burning soil. The Moor, indeed, is a person of great energy; not showing itself in impetuous sallies, but in the grave and decisive conduct of a man accustomed to command. It is only when he quits this character, and loses all self-control, that his African blood boils over and consumes him. It is then that his passions rise up in rebellion against him. He has lost, as he imagines, not a phantasm, conceived in imagination or a dream, but a wife unequalled, on whom his soul was set, and whom his deliberate judgment entirely approved. His admiration was not a fancy but a conviction, resting upon the intrinsic worth of her he loved. All, therefore — affection, judgment, the grave opinion of a cautious mind, the hopes and habits of a life now settled down into happiness, — are torn up by the roots and upset. We behold his mind utterly wrecked; and the spirit, which fretfulness and impatience never weakened, now rages without check, and uncontrollable.

One of the characteristic marks of Othello is his

language. Shakspeare forgot nothing. Othello is exhibited not only as a soldier, a tender husband, and a jealous man, but also *as a Moor*. As the drama proceeds, we see the Moorish blood running through and coloring everything he utters; as the red dawn flows in upon and illuminates the eastern sky. His words are as oriental as his dress, — ample, picturesque, and magnificent.

In running over the many dramas of Shakspeare, a thousand things occur to me that appear to deserve remark. There are his love of external nature, his graphic pictures, his humor, his sense of beauty, his appreciation of colors, of odors ('the air smells wooingly here'), of sweet sounds, and of everything valuable which the world affords. Observe how admirable his plays commence. You always hear the true note of preparation, — the key-stone at the beginning. Observe the difference between his men and women: the men embodying the active principle; the women (with a few exceptions, such as Lady Macbeth and Beatrice) the passive virtues. The men are restless and ambitious, and cut their way to fortune; the women seem moulded to inhabit the circle in which they move. Observe the difference between his poetry and that of Fletcher and others. The latter are poetical in soliloquy or narration only. They cannot make their images bear upon active life. But, look at Shakspeare! his passion springs out of the passion or humor of the time:

'Rouse thyself! and the weak wanton Cupid
Shall from thy neck unloose his amorous fold,
And, like a dew-drop from the lion's mane,
Be shook to air.'

But I should require a volume were I to reckon up his minuter beauties, or to attempt to proceed *seriatim* through his plays ; and I must, therefore, rest content with having said a few of the many things that press upon me for utterance. Saying what I have said, I leave the rest to future writers.

§ 6.

If the judgment and general intellect of Shakspeare be great, so is his style worthy of the thoughts which it enshrines. It is, beyond comparison, the most dramatic style extant. Some persons have insisted that he had no style, and have elevated this—which, if it existed, would be a defect—into a positive merit. To my thinking, the hand of Shakspeare can be traced more readily than that of any other dramatic writer. The style of Beaumont and Fletcher, or rather of Fletcher, is also very distinguishable from that of others ; it is in fact so peculiar, that it degenerates into mannerism. But though the style of Shakspeare is his own, it contains a flexibility or variety—a power of adapting itself to the different exigencies of the drama—that rescues it from mannerism and monotony. With what incomparable skill his verse is fashioned ; strong and firm without harshness, musical without weakness. An author and critic of great merit (Mr. Leigh Hunt) is disposed to prefer the versification of Beaumont and Fletcher to that of Shakspeare ; who, he thinks, was led away by the attractiveness of Marlowe's verse. This opinion has been so ably and fairly encountered by Mr. George

Darley, in his preface to the works of Beaumont and Fletcher, that it leaves me little to do beyond referring to it. I may be permitted, however, to observe, that the verse of almost all our early dramatists was confined to ten syllables; and that the verse of Shakspeare, judging by his undoubted plays, cannot in fact be said to have been founded on that of Marlowe. The verse of Marlowe, like the verse of Peele, is wanting in dramatic fitness. It is too much like that in which narrative or epic poetry is conveyed. It is better, undoubtedly, than the verse of Peele, or of any other of his cotemporaries, but in frequency, and especially in variety, of its pauses, it is often deficient. If Shakspeare indeed be (contrary to my surmise) the author of 'TITUS ANDRONICUS,' it must be admitted that he was, at the outset of his career, an imitator of the verse of Marlowe, but not otherwise.

In addition to the reasons urged by Mr. Darley against the versification of Beaumont and Fletcher, there is one other, namely, that the use of double and triple endings (which in fact constitutes their peculiarity) has a tendency to *retard* the dialogue, in all cases; and, therefore, should be very rarely used, except in soliloquy or narrative passages. In those cases, where the object is not to hurry on the interest, but in fact to operate as a relief or pause from the excitement of the play, these endings may be adopted with advantage; and accordingly we find that Shakspeare, who knew how to profit by all things, has recourse to this species of verse, in the soliloquies of Hamlet and other places. In those parts where events are rapidly proceeding, or where the *carte* and *tierce* of dialogue is

fiercely going on, these endings are abandoned as an incumbrance.

In point of fitness, Shakspeare's style surpasses that of all other writers. Let it be observed, how to the common people, as clowns, servants, &c., he allots common prosaic speech, differing, however, in each case, as the character to whom it is allotted differs from others; and being grave or humorous, terse or loose, accordingly. But to the greater personages of the drama — whether raised by native heroism or intellect, or born to a high condition, he gives noble and imaginative language, always appropriate and always adapted to sustain the purposes of the play. It is true that the individual character of certain historical persons, such as Richard the Second and Henry the Sixth, may seem scarcely to justify the fine poetry which they sometimes utter, but it is the *condition* of a king dethroned that requires it. Not that kings or heroes are for ever in the 'Ercles' vein. Shakspeare knew that they jested and became prosaic like other men. And these occasional descents from high verse to familiar words, in the same person, may be defended on various grounds; sometimes by the quality of the people addressed, sometimes by the circumstance on which the dialogue turns, sometimes by the elevation or tension of the character being lowered or relaxed, in order to accommodate it to some exigency in the drama, or to produce some desirable effect.

The language of Richard the Third is that of a man of the world, bold, practical, and to the point; while that of Macbeth is speculative and imaginative. Yet both are ambitious men, and both brave men; only ambition

in one case seems to advance upon an infirm and yielding nature and to excite it, and in the other it is sought by a resolute spirit, in whom the passion seems to have existed from his birth. The language of Henry the Eighth (a successful tyrant) differs from John, a tyrant surrounded by trouble. The lover Romeo differs from the lover Troilus : the capricious Cleopatra from the wanton Cressid : Thersites from Apemantus : and even Richard the Second (although both are kings, both weak, and both in the same state of adversity) from the husband of Margaret of Anjou. The same differences might be shown by analyzing the characters of Shakspeare separately, and tracing the gradations and shades of language from the commencement to the end of the play. In Lear alone, there is first the generous kingly opening ; then the violent language (degenerating into that awful curse) of a wilful monarch thwarted in his humor and self-love ; then the bitter language produced by ingratitude ; then the sublime pathos ; then the babblings and wandering of madness ; and, finally, the recurrence of tenderness towards his 'joy, although the last not least,' the true-hearted Cordelia, which immediately precedes his death.

I have, upon a former occasion, alluded to two distinguishing peculiarities in Shakspeare's style. One is that his speeches, instead of being directed or limited, for the time, to one person or one subject only, *radiate* (so to speak), or point on all sides, dealing with all persons present, and with all subjects that can be supposed to influence the speaker. The other distinction is, that the most subtle and profound reflections fre-

quently enrich and are involved (parenthetically) in the dialogue, without impeding it; such as, in 'ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA,' where Antony speaks of

' Our slippery people
(*Whose love is never linked to the deserfer,*
Till his deserts be past) begin to thin ;'

and, in 'TROIUS AND CRESSIDA,' where Ulysses says,

' Right and wrong
(*Between whose endless jars justice resides*)
Should lose their names :'

and elsewhere in abundance.

Incomparision with that of Shakspere, Ben Jonson's style is crabbed, Beaumont and Fletcher's weak, loose, and disjointed, and Massinger's like that of a rhetorician. There is not in these, or in any other dramatic author, as far as I can recollect, a merit, be it of modulation or language, that has not been surpassed over and over again by Shakspere.

It has been said that there is something occult in the language of true poetry : and, as there is something mysterious in the source of poetry, it *may* be that there is something mysterious and occult in its demonstrations ; and that it is intelligible only, in its fullest extent, to persons of an apprehensive or imaginative intellect (so to speak), being themselves akin to poets. Yet perhaps, after all, it may be only the exquisite propriety and taste found in their words and phrases, that (in those parts where there is an absence of any strong evidence of imagination), determines the difference between the true poet, and the mere copyist or compounder of verse.

§ 7.

I have already adverted to the benefits which Shakspeare conferred upon his country ; but I shall indulge myself in a few words more upon the subject.

There have been three events in the literary history of England, which, it is said, tended beyond others to raise the public mind out of the barbarism and ignorance of our early times. These were the translation of the Bible, the works of Bacon, and the dramas of Shakspeare. The first, whatever peril may have attended it by severing the Christian church into many sects, assuredly rescued our predecessors from much idolatry and the domination of an ambitious priesthood, and gave an impulse and independence to thought in matters of infinite moment. In like manner, Bacon dissipated the clouds which hung about science, and liberated Reason from the thralldom of precedent and custom. And, finally, Shakspeare arose, like a sun, scattering the darkness, and developing the shape and life of all things ; a discoverer (beyond Cadmus or Columbus) of all the varieties of the human race, of all the good and evil, and power and weakness that belong to man. He has left nothing untouched, from the king dividing his dominions, to the insect 'that we tread upon ;' from the princely philosopher to the braggart and the idiot. His light has shone upon all things, has penetrated all things, and drawn from all things a lesson and a moral, capable of invigorating the intellect and expanding the affections of every being capable of thought. Nor is it alone by what this great writer teaches, but by what he suggests, that we are to estimate

his value. It is one of the unfailing signs of a true poet, that the seeds of wisdom which he strews before us should germinate and bring forth fruit. He does not borrow, for our edification, the common-places which have been familiar to us from our cradle, and which have ceased to incite us; he does not propound to us barren truths (facts); but he bears us away to 'fresh fields' and 'pastures,' fertile as well as 'new;' and amidst the mysteries and startling objects of a strange region, he leaves us to profit as best we may.

If Bacon educated the reason, Shakspeare educated the heart; yet not alone the heart, but the reason also. He knew that by conquering the affections one great road to the intellect would be won. Moreover, in letting loose his imagination, he liberated at the same time the imaginations of other men; lifting them, as it were, to his own height and point of vision, and teaching them how to soar, and think, and speculate, in a manner never displayed before. He united the wisdom of the historian and the moralist. To the subtlety of a metaphysician he joined the acuteness of a writer on dialectics. He surpassed Æschylus in grandeur, Euripides in pathos, Aristophanes in wit. If the dramas of Shakspeare were resorted to as mere exercises of the intellect, they would be beyond all value. There is no school in which so much, or things so various, may be taught. There is in them, it is true, neither Latin nor Greek, neither hexameter nor pentameter. We hear nothing of the steam-engine, nor of the north-west passage (although sounds come to us

'From the still vexed Bermoothes');

nothing of geometry or arithmetic, except that Michael Cassio was 'an arithmetician.' But we behold the living world before us, teeming with its hopes and desires, its joy, and throes, and agonies; the passions in all their forms; evil in its many shapes; and good intermixed with evil. We see the means and ends of government; the springs and effects of conduct; faction and loyalty; slavery and independence; confidence, envy, mistrust; all (as they are called) the accidents of life, mingled and interwoven with each other, and forming, if rightly read, a rule of conduct, a profound lesson, for every character and condition of life, from the beggar up to the king.

Various opinions have been formed as to the particular quality of mind for which Shakspeare was most eminent. I think, however, as I have heretofore said, that in all the cases where critics have attempted to distinguish him by any one particular excellence of intellect, they have failed. One writer has brought forward his imagination; another his sublimity or humor; whilst Mr. Gifford refers to his wit, — in which he has surely been equalled. If I myself were desired to point out any one quality as predominant above the rest, I should be inclined to fix upon the infinite delicacy of his mind, which (with equal subtlety and judgment) defined the thousand shades and varieties of human character, — all that lies between the good and the bad, the strong and the weak, the lofty and the low; or I might, perhaps, rest on that marvellous freedom from egotism, which enabled him to create so many beings (all with the true stamp of humanity upon them) without betraying a single touch of any humor or

infirmity peculiar to himself. But I should do neither. For his great merit, as it appears to me, is, that he had no peculiar or prominent merit. His mind was so well constituted, so justly and admirably balanced, that it had *nothing in excess*. It was the harmonious combination, the well adjusted powers, aiding and answering to each other as occasion required, that produced his completeness, and constituted, as I think, the secret of his great entire intellectual strength.

§ 8.

Something remains to be said, touching the moral effect of Shakspeare's writings. A few words must suffice.

The critics, with illustrious exceptions, and the sectarians of modern times, are continually striving to exalt authors of the didactic class above the rest of their brethren, by the distinguishing title of 'moral writers.' In this category (which includes sometimes the great name of Milton), Cowper and Young, together with Mr. Pollock and some other inferior writers, are ranked; and none but these favored few are admitted into the houses of the stricter sects. The gates of those un-catholic temples are shut against the large body of poets, who are excluded as a lost or perilous race. And yet, between the (so called) pious and profane, the interval is not extremely wide. Nay, the object of each may be, and in fact often is, the same. No healthy poet or sensible man, I apprehend, ever meditated a story with a view of deducing from it a pernicious moral. Instances have arisen, in which a

book having a good and honest design, has been marred in some degree by coarse and voluptuous passages; but these are comparatively rare; and after all, the parts to be reprehended must be taken into account, and balanced with the positive good which the works contain, before such works can be fairly set aside, or condemned as injurious to the general reader. The writings of Shakspeare himself, however, are singularly free from these objections. There is occasionally a coarseness of phrase which must be attributed to the age in which he lived: but he never tampered with truth,—never threw down the boundaries between vice and virtue,—never strove by voluptuous images to excite the passions,—nor by fallacious arguments to ensnare the mind or confuse the intellect upon any subject whatsoever.

The objections to the greater number of poets and fabulists (and to the dramatists in particular) lie, I imagine, not so much in their want of a good moral, as in their mode of illustrating it,—not so much in the end, as in their means of arriving at the end. The bustling incidents of a story, the bright pictures of human happiness, the terrible truths which escape with throes out of our erring nature, and in a word the passions and absorbing interests of life, with whatever purpose presented, are all too real and stimulative to be tolerated by any sect who are ‘exclusives’ in their own opinion, and in whose cold creed Charity (in its extensive sense) does not prevail. Yet the beautiful and touching parables of Scripture are surely as holy and as pregnant with wisdom, as the most moral proverb which the wisest of sages has bequeathed. It

is well argued by Sir Philip Sidney — ‘Even our Saviour, Christ, could as well have given the moral common-places of uncharitableness and humbleness, as the divine narration of Dives and Lazarus; or of disobedience and mercy, as the heavenly discourse of the lost child and the gracious father; but that his thorough-searching wisdom knew the estate of Dives burning in hell, and of Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom, would more constantly, as it were, inhabit both the memory and judgment.’

Shakspeare, like all other great imaginative writers, thought thus, and is therefore seldom didactic. He does not always paint even the virtues triumphant. It is by enlisting our *sympathies* on the side of those who are good, by exciting our pity for the injured, and our hatred towards the knave and the oppressor, that his moral effects are produced; not by merely predicting and insisting on a moral or consequence, as necessarily flowing from certain premises; for that may be insisted on and elaborated without producing any effect at all.

For my own part, I have no doubt but that Shakspeare (banished as he may be from some good men’s tables) was right, — right in his philosophy, right in his extensive charity, right in his morals, and right in his mode of demonstrating all. Had he ventured upon any other mode than the one he has chosen, he would have slighted, unwisely, the impulse of his genius, and would not have effected one-hundredth part of the good that he has produced. The soundness as well as importance of a writer may generally be learned from the number and quality of his admirers, better than from any labored analysis of his works, or any contrast drawn

between him and others. A man who is at the head of a small *Sect*, is probably a person of small and eccentric mind, — influencing a few others, of a similar mean and distorted intellect. But the founder of a RELIGION must always be a mighty Spirit. No one who is the theme of reverence with a million intelligent minds, but must have propounded in his writings or doctrines much both of the good and the true. Throughout the language in which he wrote, Shakspeare is all supreme. There is not a sceptic or dissentient whose arguments are worth refutation.

That our great author may be imperfect, as he is said to be, is merely saying that he belonged to imperfect humanity. The flaws and errors of his dramas are few, however, and possibly owe their origin to interpolators; besides which, I must protest against such a process of judging. It is not by what a man occasionally fails or omits to do (for that may arise from hurry or accident) but by what he has *done*, that his capability and value must be decided. It is by the profound wisdom of Shakspeare, by his wonderful imagination, displayed in a thousand varieties of character, by his subtle and delicate fancies, his grand thoughts, his boundless charity, — nay, even by the music that steals into our souls, with the countless changes and fluctuations, from strength to sweetness, of his charming verse, that we must learn to regard him truly. But all this eulogy would be superfluous, except for a limited class of thinkers; for Shakspeare is now making his way through foreign countries and distant regions; vanquishing race after race, like the great conquerors of old; in spite of ignorance and prejudice, and imperfect

teachers ; and in the midst of dim and obscure interpretations, that would check the progress of any Spirit less potent and catholic than his own !

In the summer time, when the world is cheerful and full of life, let us regale ourselves with the laughing scenes and merry songs of SHAKSPERE. In the winter evenings, when sadder thoughts come forth, let us rest upon his grave, philosophic page, and try to gather comfort as well as wisdom from the deep speculations which may be found there. At *all* times, let his ' Book of Miracles ' be near at hand : for, be sure that the more we read therein, the greater must our reverence be. And, if any intruder should tell us that all we ponder on and admire is mere matter of imagination and fancy ; is shadowy, unreal, without profit ; and that the end is — nought : bid him show you the thing that is eternal, — or any effort of the human mind that has outlasted the dreams of Poetry. Have I said that they are dreams ? Alas ! what is there here that is so far beyond a dream ? WE ourselves (so our great poet says)

' Are of such stuff

AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF ; AND OUR LITTLE LIFE
IS ROUNDED WITH A SLEEP !'

THE DEATH OF FRIENDS.

DEATH is the tyrant of the imagination. His reign is in solitude and darkness; in tombs and prisons; over weak hearts and seething brains. He lives, without shape or sound, a phantasm; inaccessible to sight or touch; a ghastly and terrible *Apprehension*.

The fear of death is common to all. There never was a man of such hardihood of nerve, but he has, at one time or other, shrunk from pain or peril, the result of which might be death. Death is a certain evil, if life be a good. Despair may welcome it, and philosophy may affect to disregard its approach; but our instinct, which is always true, first commands us to fear. It is not so much the pain of dying, nor even the array of death, (though the '*pompa mortis*' is sufficiently repelling;) but it is that vague and tremendous thought, that vast impenetrable gloom, without depth, or breadth, or bound, which no reason can compass and no intellect pry into, that alarms us. Our fancy is ripe with wonders, and it fills up the space between us and Heaven.

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There is something very sad in the death of friends. We seem to provide for our own mortality, and to make up our minds to die. We are warned by sickness,—fever, and ague, and sleepless nights, and a hundred dull infirmities; but when our *friends* pass away, we lament them as though we had considered them immortal.

It is wise, I *suppose*, that we should attach ourselves to things which are transient; else it seems to be a perilous trust when a man ties his hopes to so frail a thing as woman. They are so gentle, so affectionate, so true in sorrow, so untired and untiring; but the leaf withers not sooner, the tropic lights fade not more abruptly into darkness. They die and are taken from us; and we weep; and our friends tell us that it is not wise to grieve, for that all which is mortal perisheth. They do not know that

We grieve *the more* because we grieve in vain!

If our grief could bring back the dead, it would be stormy and loud; we should disturb the sunny quiet of day; we should startle the dull night from her repose. But our *hearts* would not grieve as they grieve now, when hope is dead within us.

I remember, even as a gray-headed man remembers, clearly and more distinctly than the things of yesterday, that which happened long ago. I remember, when I was about four years of age, how I learned to spell, and was sent daily in the servant's hand to a little day-school, to fight my way (amidst a score of other urchins) through the perils of the alphabet. I had no ambition then, no hatred, no uncharitableness.

If these dæmons have possessed me since, they must have been cast down upon me by the 'malice of my stars.' I had no *organs* for such things: yet now I can hate almost as strongly as I love, and am as constant to my antipathies as to my affections.

Well, when my fifth was running into my sixth year, and I was busied with parables and Scripture history (the only food which nourished my infant mind), I was much noticed by a young person, a female. I was at that time living with an old relation in H——shire, and I still preserve the recollection of Miss R——'s tender condescension towards me. She was a pretty delicate girl, and very amiable; and I became—(yes, it is true, for I remember the strong feelings of that time)—*enamored* of her. My love had the fire of passion, but not the clay which drags it downwards; it partook of the innocence of my years, while it etherealized me. Whether it was the divinity of beauty that stung me, or rather that lifted me above the darkness and immaturity of childhood, I know not; but my feelings were any thing but childish. By some strong intuition I felt that there was a difference (I knew not what) that called forth an extraordinary and impetuous regard.

She was the first object (save my mother) that I ever attached myself to. I had better have loved a flower, a weed. For when I knew her she had the seeds of death within her. Consumption had 'caught her;' his sickly hand was upon her, like the canker on the rose, and drew out a perilous, unearthly bloom. The hues and vigor of life were flushing too quickly through her cheek—(yet how pale she was at times!) She wasted

a month in an hour—a year in a month; and at last died in the stormy autumn time, when the breath of summer had left her.

The last time I ever saw her was (as well as I can recollect) in October, or late in September. I was told that Miss R—— was ill, was *very* ill, and that perhaps I might not see her again. Death I could not, of course, comprehend; but I understood perfectly what was a perpetual absence from my pretty friend. Whether I wept or raved, or how it was, I know not; but I was taken to visit her. It was a cold day, and the red and brown leaves were plentiful on the trees: and it was afternoon when we arrived at an old-fashioned country-house (something better than a farmhouse), which stood at some distance from the high road. The sun was near his setting; but the whole of the wide west was illuminated, and threw crimson and scarlet colors on the windows, over which hung a cloud of vine-stalks and changing leaves that dropped by scores on every summons of the blast. There she sate—in a parlor full of flowers (herself the fairest)—among China roses and glittering ice-plants, and myrtles which no longer blossomed. She was sitting (as I entered) in a large arm-chair covered with white, like a faded Flora, and was looking at the sun: but she turned her bright and gentle looks on me, and the pink bloom dimpled on her cheek as she smiled and bade me welcome. I have often thought of her since. I look on her, as it seems, even now—through what a waste of years! I see her cheek, at first like a lily, just tinged, but afterwards deepening into the brightest red, from the agitation perhaps of meeting with visitors.

The flowers that were around looked as fragile as herself—summer companions. But the wild Autumn was around her and them, and the Winter himself was coming. He *came*, almost before his time, cold and remorseless, and she shrank, and withered, and died. The rose-blooms and the myrtles lived on, a little longer; but the crimson beauty of her cheeks faded for ever.

The progress from infancy to boyhood is imperceptible. In that long dawn of the mind we take but little heed. The years pass by us, one by one, little distinguishable from each other. But when the intellectual sun of our life is risen, we take due note of joy and sorrow. Our days grow populous with events; and through our nights bright trains of thought run, illuminating the airy future, and dazzling the days we live in. We have the unalloyed fruition of hope; and the best is that the reality is still to come.

I went to a public school when I was about thirteen years of age, and carried thither a modest eye and a bashful spirit. I was stored with tales and fictions, with the marvels of travel, many of them derived from an old relation, a sort of great uncle, who had always treated me with kindness. He used to place me upon his knee, in the winter evenings, and tell me stories of foreign countries, of Eastern and Western India; of buffaloes and serpents; of the crocodile and the tawny lion, and how he bounded through the jungles; and what the elephant with his almost human faculty could do; and how the shark would follow ships by a strange instinct; and how the whale could spout out his cata-racts of water; and a hundred other wonders which I

listened to with a greedy air. He never failed, either in his kindness or his stories,—at least towards me. He was a weather-beaten man, could shoot, and hunt, and in his youth had doubled the Cape, and traversed the Indian ocean.

But he was doomed to die. He had been ill when I last saw him, in the Christmas holidays; yet I little thought that the grave was so near him. I was summoned home, one day, to weep and wear mourning; and I went to the house of his widow, where he lay—dead. Oh what a visit was that! It haunted me for years. The servant said that *he*—(what '*he*'? was it the heap of dust?)—that he *lay* in the front drawing-room. I shuddered and stopped; but I was assured that he looked just as though he were asleep. Let no one believe such things. There is nothing so unlike sleep as death. It is a poet's lie. The one is a gracious repose, a vital calm; the other is a horrid solemnity, no more like sleep than a mask of plaster; stiff, rigid, white—beyond the whiteness of shrouds or the paleness of stone. All parallels fail: we strain at comparisons in vain.

I went up to see my old friend. There was silence all about, and the stone steps of the staircase sent out unusual echoes. The door was opened,—slowly, as though we should disturb the corpse. The windows were closed, and there were long wax candles burning at the head and at the feet; and over all a white sheet was carefully thrown. The length—the *prodigious* length that the body seemed to occupy, at once startled me, and I recoiled. But the servant proceeded, and uncovered the head of the coffin. After an effort I

looked—Ah! would to God that I had never looked. There he lay, like a stone. His mouth was bound up, and his eyelids had been pressed down, and his nose was pinched as though by famine. The white death was upon him—the rioter, the ruler of graves. And my old friend was swathed in fine linen, and pure crape was cut and crimped about him, as though to save him from the worm and the sapping earth. 'T was poor mockery of his humble state; and yet perhaps it was meant kindly. Three days after this he was borne away in a hearse, and I let out my grief in tears.

I scarcely know how it is, but the deaths of children seem to me always less premature than those of elder persons. Not that they are in fact so; but it is because they themselves have little or no relation to time or maturity. Life seems a race which they have yet to run entirely. They have made no progress towards the goal. They are born,—nothing further. But it seems hard when a man has toiled high up the steep hill of knowledge, that he should be cast, like Sisypheus, downwards in a moment: that he who has worn the day and wasted the night in gathering the gold of science, should be—with all his wealth of learning, all his accumulations—made bankrupt at once. What becomes of all the riches of the soul, the piles and pyramids of precious thoughts which men heap together? Where are Shakspeare's imagination, Bacon's learning, Galileo's dream? Where is the sweet fancy of Sidney, the airy spirit of Fletcher, and Milton's thought severe? Methinks such things should not die and dissipate, when a hair can live for centuries, and a brick of Egypt will last three thousand years! I am

content to believe that the mind of man survives (somewhere or other) his clay.

I was once present at the death of a little child. I will not pain the reader by portraying its agonies; but when its breath was gone—its *life*—(nothing more than a cloud of smoke!) and it lay like a waxen image before me, I turned my eyes to its moaning mother, and sighed out my few words of comfort. But I am a beggar in grief. I can feel, and sigh, and look kindly, I think; but I have nothing to give. My tongue deserts me. I know the inutility of too soon comforting. I know that *I* should weep, were I the loser; and I let the tears have their way. Sometimes, a word or two I can muster: a ‘Sigh no more!’ and ‘Dear lady, do not grieve!’ but further, I am mute and useless.

To pass from this, to another scene of a darker color. It was in W——shire that I heard a medical friend tell of a death-bed which he had witnessed. The man who died was a rich farmer. He was the father of two natural children (females), whom he made do all the drudgery of his house. He was a hard landlord, a bad master, a libertine, and a miser, a drunkard, a fighter at fairs and markets; and over his children he used a tyranny which neither tears nor labor could mitigate. But he was stopped in his headlong course. A fierce pain came upon him: a fire raged in his vitals. His strong limbs, which no wrestler could twist, and no antagonist lay prostrate, shrank before an unseen foe. Fever encompassed him, and delirium; and in his frightful dreams he called aloud, he shrieked, he wept like a child. He prayed for help,

for ease, for a little respite. It was all in vain. My friend attended this man, and, though used to scenes of death, this terrified even him. He said that the raving of the sufferer was beyond belief—it was the noise of a great animal, not of man. His eye glared, and he swore perpetually, and said that Satan was in wait for him, and pointed towards a corner of the chamber. When he made an effort, it was like the struggle of the tiger. And then he would listen, and cry that he heard the dull roll of drums, and the stamp of a war-horse, and the sounds of trumpets—calling—calling; and he answered and shrieked that ‘he was coming.’ — *And he went!*

Most of my own friends have died calmly. One wasted away for months and months; and though death came slowly, he came too soon. I was told that Mr. — ‘wished to live.’ On the very day on which he died he tried to battle with the great king, to stand up against the coldness and faintness which seized upon him. But he died, notwithstanding, and though quietly, reluctantly. Another friend (a female) died easily and in old age, surviving her faculties. A third met death smiling. A fourth was buried in Italian earth among flowers and odorous herbs. A fifth, the nearest of all, died gradually, and his children came about him, and were sad; but *he* was resigned to all fortunes, for he believed in a long ‘hereafter!’ — And so time passes. So

‘Labuntur anni : nec pietas moram
Rugis et instanti senectæ
Afferet, indomitæque morti.’

There is something inexpressively touching in an

anecdote which I have heard of a foreign artist. He was an American, and had come hither (he and his young wife) to paint for fame and — a subsistence. They were strangers in England: they had to fight against prejudice and poverty; but their affection for each other solaced them under every privation, every frown of fortune. They could *think*, at least, ‘all the way over’ the great Atlantic: and their fancy (little cherished here) had leisure to be busy among the friends and scenes which they had left behind. A gentleman, who had not seen them for some time, went one day to the artist’s painting-room, and observing him pale and worn, inquired about his health, and afterwards regarding his wife. He answered, only, ‘*She has left me* ;’ and proceeded in a hurried way with his work. She was dead! — and he was left alone to toil, and get money, and mourn. The heart in which he had hoarded all his secrets, all his hopes, was cold; and Fame itself was but a shadow.

And so it is, that all we love must wither; that we ourselves must wither and die away. ‘Tis a trite saying: yet a wholesome moral belongs to it. The thread of our life is spun; it is twisted firmly, and looks as if it would last for ever. All colors are there, — the gaudy yellow and the sanguine red, and black — dark as death; yet is it cut in twain by the shears of Fate almost before we discern the peril.

All that has been, and is, and is to be, must die, and the grave will possess all. Already the temple of Death is stored with enormous treasures; but it shall be *filled*, till its sides shall crack and moulder, and its gaunt king ‘Death, the skeleton,’ shall wither, like his

prey. Oh ! if the dead may speak, by what rich noises is that solemn temple haunted ! What a countless throng of shapes is there, — kings and poets, philosophers and soldiers ! What a catalogue might not be reckoned, from the founder of the towers of Belus, to the Persian who encamped in the Babylonian squares, to Alexander, and Socrates, and Plato, to Cæsar, to Alfred ! Fair names, too, might be strung upon the list, like pearls or glancing diamonds, — creatures who were once the grace and beauty of the earth, queens and gentle women, — Antigone and Sappho, — Corinna and the mother of the Gracchi, — Portia and Agrippine. And the story might be ended with him, who died an exile on his sea-surrounded rock, the first emperor of France, the king and conqueror of Italy, the Corsican soldier, Napoleon.

1822.

THE SPANISH STUDENT.

AN ADVENTURE AT PADUA — FOUNDED ON FACT.

THE grass is now growing in the streets of Padua. Ranges of houses are crumbling into dust. The marble palaces of its princes are silent ; and Learning has fled, like a false friend !

Yet, still its University remains : its doctors and professors are still there ; and there still is the large clock, which thunders the dull hour into the ears of its straggling disciples. But where is the *fame* of Padua ? Where is its learned splendor ? Where are its eighteen thousand scholars, — Italian and Greek, Persian, Frank, and Arabian ? They are gone, loaded with the wealth of science : they cultivate the seeds of learning at home, and the school of Petrarch and Galileo is deserted !

It is now many years ago since a young Spanish student was seen, one sultry afternoon, descending the side of one of the Euganean hills on his return to Padua. He had been at Arqua that morning to visit the tomb of Petrarch, and was going back to the University, in which he had lately been admitted a

scholar. The youth was of a good family, and was a native of Castile, and he had been sent to Padua, in order to acquire a knowledge of languages, as well as some of the latter discoveries in science, which were not then known (or at least not taught) in the colleges of Spain. He was a serious, graceful young man, with a proud mouth and a large black eye that wanted nothing but the illumination of love to make it altogether irresistible. His name was Rodrigo Gomez; and, on the afternoon of which we have spoken, had any lady seen him treading firmly and lightly along (as though all the blood of Castile were in his veins), and looked for a moment at his expressive face, where the constant olive was now mixed and dashed with dark red, like the flush of a ruby brought out by the light, she might have pleaded a beautiful excuse for inconstancy or love. Rodrigo was not aware, however, of these things, but pressed forward with a quick step to Padua. He saw before him rich pastures stretching out into misty distance, and the gay villages of Italy scattered on each side. He passed Cataio, and the gloomy castle of the Obizzi; and keeping onwards by the canal, continued to make the best of his way homewards. Having gone a mile or two further, however, the intense heat of the day oppressed him, and he resolved to rest himself at a small inn (which he had perceived when he had passed that way before), and to complete his journey in the evening.

He was now about five or six miles from Padua, and he entered the village inn. It stood a little out of the road, and was sheltered by some large chestnut-trees from the heat of the sun. He called for refreshments,

when bread and fruit and a bottle of light wine were placed before him. In one corner of the room sate a dark sullen-looking man, whose air appeared somewhat above that of a peasant, drinking; another sang a romance to a few listeners at the door of the house; and two noble-looking men, who appeared to be foreigners, were conversing at a table near him.

‘Sing that song again, Stephano,’ said one of the party at the outside of the inn, ‘and I will give thee some music to it:’ and upon this he took a violin out of a small bag that he held in his hand, and proceeded to draw from it some exquisite tones. ‘That fellow has a fine hand,’ said one of the gentlemen near Rodrigo in Spanish. ‘By St. Jago he would beat the nightingale. Listen!’—And the fellow played until the hearing of Rodrigo was entranced. He had heard fine music in Spain, and was painfully subject to its power. Now he listened to the masterly capriccios of the musician, and then to the tender symphony, till at last the song commenced, and the words riveted his attention. It told of ‘the Beauty of Padua,’—her faults, her snares, her bewitching eyes, and her voice sweeter than music, which none had been ever known to resist. It spoke of her as a Calypso—a Circe—a creature who outwent all sculpture, and painting, the flights of passion, and the dreams of poets; and then some plaintive burthen followed, which it was difficult to understand. But a second verse succeeding, the student listened more attentively, and caught words like these:—

‘Tell me where her beauty lies!
In her lips, or in her eyes?’

In her bosom white and deep,
Where her favor'd lovers sleep ;
In her love-enchaining smile ?
In her truth, or in her guile ?'—

and then the burthen was repeated, and the ditty closed.

'And, prythee, who is the beauty of Padua ?' said the elder Spaniard, when the song was over.

'He means Cornelia,' replied the landlord of the inn (a little stout humorous-looking man) who had just entered the room.

'I do not know her, friend,' retorted the stranger—
'who is she ? I never heard of more than one of that name, and she died long ago.'

'And pray who was *she*, if I may be so bold ?' said the host. 'We have only one of that name who has been remarkable.'

'She was a famous woman, and mother of the Gracchi !'

'Oh !—a relation perhaps. But this lady has no children : plenty of lovers, though.'

'And now, our good host,' said the Spaniard, 'sit down (here, upon this bench,) and help us to drink some of this excellent wine. Ha ! 't has a rare flavor, i' faith. This is your true Montepulciano ——'

'You are a judge, Signior,' interrupted the landlord.

'No, no ; I have tasted the true grape in my time, though, I confess. This wine reminds me of some which I drank at the Prince of C——'s, at Naples. It must be of the same vintage. But, to leave that subject—prythee sit down by me, friend, and tell us, without more ado, who *your* Cornelia is.'

The host bowed, and obeyed. He tasted his own wine like a landlord, and spoke to the following effect : —

‘About five-and-twenty years ago, Signiors,’ said he, ‘the large palace, which you will see on entering Padua, (you will know it by the fountain of lions,) belonged to a Cardinal of the family of the Minotti. He was of a proud and tyrannous temper, Sirs, as your high-born gentles frequently are; but he possessed large revenues, a wonderful stock of learning, and, as it was said, expected one day or other to be Pope. He had not always been a churchman, however; but, in his early days, had followed the trade of fighting; and had, in fact, signalized himself a little in public battles, and considerably in private disputes. In truth he was of a quarrelsome nature; and being an expert swordsman, was much respected by gallants in general. He had a friend however; one — one ——’

‘Antonio Zetti,’ said the stranger in the peasant’s dress.

‘You are right Signior,’ returned the host; ‘Zetti was the name, as I recollect, — Antonio Zetti. Well, it so chanced that this gallant fell in love with the same lady to whom the count Minotti was then attached: for the great Cardinal, Sirs, was then only a Count.’

‘By St. Jago! *only*’ — said the Spaniard.

‘Yes, Signior,’ replied the landlord, ‘nothing more, I assure you.’

‘And was not that enough?’

‘Oh, no, Signior, — a mere nothing. We think nothing of people here unless they belong to the church.’

‘Why was my crown not shaven, Guzman?’ said the Spaniard, aside, to his countryman. ‘Why, what an ass was I to carve my dinner with a sword. I might have been a scarlet king here, and poisoned the ear of the old man of the mountains.’

‘Well, Sir, the Count Minotti and his friend quarrelled (about the lady) and fought; and Antonio —’

‘Was killed. I see it to the end,’ said the Spaniard.

‘Yes, Sir, he was killed, as you say, and left a fine spring morning behind him. They met in the outskirts of Rome, (where the Count then lived,) and the first lunge cured the Signior Zetti of his passion.’

‘And the lady married the victor? hey!’ added the Spaniard. ‘The women are fond of laurels, I know, and a little blood will never spoil a green leaf.’

‘No, Sir; she was obstinate and refused the Count altogether; — an extraordinary case, Sir. He was rich, six feet high, and a soldier; but, somehow or other, she rejected all. Upon her refusal, the Count threatened extremely to kill himself. But he didn’t. No, Sir, he was too much of a soldier to die out of a brawl. On the contrary, he lived on, and pretty freely too, as report says; and, in the course of time, he fell in love again — I forget with whom — but the lady died, and then he gave up his wild courses, and left the army, and, finally, entered a convent of Dominican monks. There he remained some years; and his talents being perceived, (and his penances noised about,) he eventually became its superior. From this height it was but one step to a bishopric, and another to a cardinal’s hat. These things are not difficult, Signiors, when Fortune is in the mood to serve us. About this time the chief

of his family died, and his Eminence removed to the great Leone palace near Padua, bringing with him a female child. The girl was brought up in all manne of luxury : she had foreign masters, was taught music, and painting, and the languages, and, in short, came to be considered quite a prodigy amongst the young women here. She was beautiful, too, as I have heard said, and was thought to resemble a celebrated picture painted by Leonardo da Vinci, (a famous artist in his time,) a Florentine. However, all this lasted only eighteen or nineteen years, or thereabouts, when the old Cardinal died, and left this girl — who was generally supposed to be his child — a beggar.'

'That was a beggarly action of my lord the Cardinal,' said the elder Spaniard. 'But what became of the girl?'

'Why, Signior, the people hereabouts, finding that she could establish no claim as his daughter, began to conjecture that she might have been his mistress, and shunned her accordingly.'

'T is a good-natured world,' muttered the Spaniard.

'Yes, Signior,' returned the host, 'it takes care of its morals. Well,—about this time, and while the young girl, who was called Cornelia, was in great distress, (for she had failed in procuring scholars in music and painting and other arts of which she was mistress, owing to the strict virtue of the families here,) —about this time, comes a young gallant to the University, a handsome spark, Signiors, (about my height, or rather better,) who conquered her heart and her person at once.'

'So ! what was his name ?'

‘Antonio Zetti,’ said the peasant-looking stranger again.

‘Why, Signior!’ exclaimed the landlord, ‘you seem to know more about the matter than I do. I pray you go on with the story.’

‘May I ask, Sir,’ said the Spaniard, ‘who this Antonio was? I thought that his ‘Eminence’ (as our friend here calls him) had put an end to *his* pilgrimages.’

‘He was the son of that Antonio Zetti, Sir,’ replied the stranger. ‘His father’s life was cut off by the bloody churchman, Minotti; and the youth was sworn (as Hannibal of old was) upon a flaming altar, to revenge his father’s murder — *and he did!*’

‘But not upon Minotti!’

‘Ha, ha, ha!’ laughed the stranger. ‘I am not so sure. ’T was whispered that he set off on the road to Paradise somewhat suddenly.’

‘And his daughter? —’

‘His daughter!’ said the peasant, in a bitter voice, ‘why she would be glad to die, but that she fears to do so. Her fame is spotted like a leper’s skin. Her life is a lie — for she has virtue in her heart, if I must speak truth, while she gives herself away to sin. Some say that she gives to no one more than a smile —’

‘Why does she not quit her horrid ways?’ interrupted the Spaniard.

‘*Why*, Signior? — why, because she cannot starve, and dare not die. Oh! she’s a rare riddle, worse even than the Sphinx; for ’t is said that all who comprehend her, perish.’

‘Yours is an odd story, Sir.’

'Tis whispered that her lovers die, Sir, by some means or other, as soon as she has begun to like them. A score of them are gone. Some have destroyed themselves, some are missing, and some have been heard of fastened to the boats at Tripoli. She is a perilous person, Sirs, and therefore — beware !'

And, so saying, he left the room.

Throughout the whole of this story the Student had listened with an intense interest ; and, during the latter part of the dialogue, had kept his eyes fixed upon the peasant's face until he departed. Rodrigo then rose from his chair ; and, after paying for his temperate repast, followed the track of the stranger.

[Thus far the facts of this story were detailed by the Senor Antonio Luis Gomez, who was, in fact, the 'elder Spaniard' of the preceding chapter. He, it seems, had not seen his nephew since his childhood, having been for some years before a resident in India. He was then proceeding, as it was said, from Leghorn to Padua and Venice, (having only touched upon his native soil,) to settle some important private affairs. The latter part of the story (such as it is) has been collected partly from the lips of the woman at whose house Rodrigo lodged, and partly from the Student's own letters.]

The curiosity of Rodrigo had been raised to an extreme pitch. It was his fault, indeed, (if it be a fault) to possess an inquisitive spirit. He was born in a sunny country, and was gifted with a warm imagination. His passions — those devils which lay waste the elysium of young hearts — were now abroad, raging and devouring, flushing his cheeks with scarlet, and

making his eye glitter and his pulse to tremble. He was almost a stranger in Italy — young, fiery, curious, and had never been in love. What more is required to account for the most extravagant actions ?

He followed the stranger, who had spoken in a tone of bitterness towards Minotti and his daughter, and at last overtook him in a hollow about a quarter of a mile from the inn. ‘ You walk quick, Sir,’ called he, when he arrived near to the object of his search. The stranger turned suddenly round, and put his hand into his bosom ; but seeing who it was, only smiled. ‘ Ha ! young Sir, is it you ? What has tempted you to desert your wine and olives before the red heat of the sun is quite down ? You would have done more wisely to have rested longer.’

‘ No,’ replied Rodrigo, ‘ I was enough refreshed ; and, to speak truth, I was desirous of a companion to cheat the weariness of the way.’

‘ Ay ! — are you a stranger here ? ’ inquired his companion.

‘ Yes, Senor,’ returned he, ‘ I am a Spaniard.’

‘ Yours is a brave country, Signior,’ said the stranger. ‘ I love it. It is the land of gallantry and romance. *This* is a den of intrigue.’

‘ I thought it had been the temple of study,’ said the youth.

‘ It is,’ retorted the stranger ; ‘ we study how to gratify ourselves — how to sing, to fiddle, to idle, to lie, to cheat, and — *to revenge !*’

‘ I came here only to learn Greek and Latin and the sciences,’ said the student ; ‘ I shall get more than I reckoned upon.’

‘ You will, Signior ; and of that you may be sure.’

The conversation now drooped into silence : for, although Rodrigo had been impatient to learn some more particulars of the daughter of Minotti, he had not courage to make a direct inquiry. In the course of half an hour more they approached the city. The sun had, by this time, sunk, but he had gone down blushing to the bed of Thetis his bride, and had left all the west dyed in hot light. A long vast irregular cloud stretched itself across the sky from south to north, having one side tinged with the crimson lustre of the sun, while the other presented a hard purple outline, which the imagination might almost have impregnated with life. And now came sighing through the myrtle and almond trees the gentle voice of the evening wind. The vines, which crept from tree to tree, rustled and shook their fringed leaves: the unseen brook, that had appeared to lie silent all through the sultry day, awoke and ran along bubbling and sparkling amongst weeds and flowers ; while, in the distance, where the city lay, might be seen lights flashing, and vanishing, and re-appearing, at a hundred different points from the windows of Padua. It was now the close of the day, and a long booming sound (it was the evening gun) went rolling over the dusk meadows, like the hollow echoes of thunder, and announced that the city watch was set.

While Rodrigo was bathing his forehead (for he had uncapped) in the cool odors of the breeze, and was speculating on fifty things all beautiful and impossible, he turned suddenly round from the west, (now grown faint and obscure,) and beheld near him a stupendous

object which had been hitherto concealed by the trees and the windings of the road, but which now flung down a vast black shadow on that part of the road which he was soon about to traverse. When they had arrived close at the place, the stranger said in a peculiar voice, 'This is the Fountain of Lions.' Rodrigo raised his eyes, and beheld an old overgrown palace heaving up its huge square shoulder between him and the rising moon. Every thing about it appeared utterly deserted, and the 'Fountain of Lions' itself seemed to have become neglected. Four of those grand beasts, larger than life, and cut in granite, lay there, with their enormous paws stretched out and their stony jaws open, but no sparkling water came forth; and the large circular basin below, over which ran (carved in strong relief) the stories of poets, was dry and dusty and useless. 'Ha, ha!' said the stranger again, 'This is the house of Minotti!' — and, as he ceased, the echoes took up the word, and uttered in a hoarse and distended tone, 'Minotti! — Minotti!' It was as though the inanimate marbles had risen from their stony sleep, and flung back the name of their dead master upon the man who reviled him in his grave: 'That was odd enough,' said Rodrigo; and the stranger assented in a suppressed tone, and then both walked on in silence. At length, they recovered themselves, and talked of various matters until they arrived at the gates of the city. 'Here I must leave you, Signior,' said the stranger, 'farewell!' — 'Farewell,' replied Rodrigo — 'yet, stay: — you told us a curious story about a woman of Padua.' The stranger was silent. 'May I ask,' resumed the student, 'where she lives?' — 'In

the western suburbs, young Sir; but be wise, and go not thither. You have heard of Circe? and Calypso?' — 'Yes.' — 'Well; she is of that family, and may prove a perilous friend.' 'I thank you for your advice, Signior. I should like to know whom I may thank hereafter. Your name is ——' the student hesitated. '*Antonio Zetti!*' was the reply. And Rodrigo and the stranger parted.

That night the Spanish student never reached his home. But when the first rays of the sun were streaming over the plains of the Milanese, he returned to his chamber, exceeding wearied, as though he had passed the night in wandering. He came with a flushed yet haggard countenance, and a slow step, and looked thoughtful and even melancholy. 'Did you lose your way from Arqua, Signior?' inquired the dame with whom he lodged. 'Ay,' said he, 'I have been far from the right path, but I shall know better another time;' saying which he retired to his room, and passed the whole of that day alone.

The next evening he was absent till past midnight, and the next, — and the next; and so he continued day after day. His social and gentle manners disappeared, his fresh look was gone, and his purse (repeatedly replenished and as often secretly exhausted) no longer afforded him the means of being liberal or even just. The letters of introduction which he had brought to Padua remained undelivered, and one or two friends who had been requested to notice him, complained of his having abandoned them. His landlady now (whose bill was larger than she wished), grew curious and a little impatient on the subject of her lodger. 'Our

young gentleman grows thinner and thinner every day, observed Lorenza to her mother. — ‘Ay girl, replied his hostess, ‘he is as thin as his purse. I do not understand his doings, not I.’ ‘He grows paler,’ said the daughter. — ‘Ay, ay, and poorer too,’ retorted the dame. ‘I must take some means to get my money soon, or perhaps he’ll die in my debt. I do not understand it. Here, he eats and drinks at my cost —’ ‘Ah! mother, he eats so little,’ said the interceding Lorenza. ‘Why, to be sure, he *hath* grown sparing,’ answered the mother:—and here the conversation ended.

Shortly after this, however, the hostess (having made no further progress into the student’s secret) applied to him peremptorily for money. He blushed and stammered out something about his remittances, and soon after, in a sad and drooping condition, quitted the house. He returned, however, and paid her, and from that time afterwards was *never* heard of. The landlady waited for him during that day, and expected him throughout the night, and the next day also, — and the next, — and the next. But he never came. At last, she made known the circumstance of his disappearance to his friends, who set on foot every inquiry, but in vain. There was nothing which threw a light on this mysterious subject: unless it was a passage or two from some letters written by the student to a young countryman of his, to whom it appears he was related. These letters, which are for the most part penned in a small tremulous hand, are addressed to ‘*The Senor Juan Llanos, at Avila in Leon,*’ and contain among other things, (not essential to this story,) the following

curious extracts :—[After giving a brief account of the dialogue at the inn, which we have been enabled to state much more at length, he details the particulars of his walk homewards, which have been already given ; and then proceeds.]

‘ I felt — shall I say it ? — an appetite, a passion, a burning desire, an intense curiosity beyond all that possesses ordinary men. My devil was an inquisitive spirit, which rode me like a nightmare. I could no longer resolve to be incurious or content. I saw a hell open before me, and I resolved to cast myself into its abyss. My love — but it was *not* love : It was to true love like what a stove-heated room odorous with jasmine and roses is to the clear and bracing air. My limbs trembled and were restless. My eye glanced about, yet noted nothing. My mouth was dry, and I bit my lips till they ran over with blood. I hurried on through the streets, past shops and warehouses and blazing inns — and at last reached the suburbs. Still I kept on with an unsubdued pace. The moon had risen, and the evening star was straight above me. I looked at it, and it threw down its small piercing eye, as though it saw through my purpose. I had now reached the last house of the town. Before me was a dark lane, whose hedges were overgrown with honeysuckle and flaunting ivy. I plunged into it in a moment, and gave my soul up to intoxication and love.’

It appears, by another letter, that Rodrigo failed that night in finding the idol of his imagination. She was discovered by him afterwards, however, and he gave himself to her society, utterly reckless of the world around him. He made her magnificent presents, which (to do her justice) she received somewhat unwillingly, and she, in fact, appears to have been ignorant of the amount of his resources. At last, the madness of a boy prevailed with her, and she returned his love with

a passion as intense as his own. At this period he writes thus : —

‘ You should see her, my friend, as I have seen her, more beautiful than the summer rainbow. You should hear her speak, so sweetly, so smilingly, and sing, like the pining nightingale. For she, too, has no mate, and lives in a green haunt, mysterious and alone, like that bird whom the poets write of. Her breath is like the odor of flowers — her tread like air — and her eyes as the starry nights of August are. But, why do I fret thee with these trite smiles ? I have felt *her kisses* ! do you hear ? — her hot, inticing, intoxicating kisses. Her lips have burned love upon me, — and I live ! — Oh ! Juan, Juan ! that was no fable which tells of the witch Circe and her crowd of brute slaves. *I myself* am transformed in spirit, — prostrate and supine. How willingly would I lay me down on the base ground and bid her trample me to dust ! Juan, am I not lost ? I have gone from myself, surely. I have left all study, all amusements, all converse of friends. The intellect of past ages which opened upon me like a Heaven, now looks dull and murky. I have abandoned all things for one alone, and she may be at last — a woman ! ’

Some of his other letters are such a mere tissue of extravagant sayings, that we cannot venture to transcribe them. He seems to have been bewitched beyond all chance of relief. He talks more rapturously than a poet could do, and as fondly as a life-devoted lover.

‘ I have just left her, and it is a relief to me to write to thee, my dear friend Juan. Do not perplex me with thy advice ; it is heartless, and cold, and useless. I am hers for ever. We hear of menaces, and strange stories are told to us in secret, and horrid forebodings haunt us ; but we are constant to each other, and that makes amends for all. “ Amends,” do I say ? Is it thus that the slave of Love can speak, who ought to be so grateful, so devoted ? — Juan, I have just left her. Oh ! hers are the gardens of enchantment. The fountains and fruit

trees, — the waving whispering branches, the ground carpeted with flowers, the marble hall, the Persian couches, the glittering wines, and the maddening kisses, — I feel them still. Were I not thus to pour out my folly before thee, I should die of excess of pleasure.'

.

'And yet we are circled all round with peril. That horrible Zetti is near us, who wears his hand eternally on his dagger, and feeds only upon blood and gold. His emissaries are upon us. Every step that I tread is watched. I heard his laugh last night from a thicket in her garden, as I pressed her to escape from him and Padua. He is a very devil, whom revenge and a coarse passion alternately sway. And yet we live under this contemptible tyranny! Juan. What shouldst thou think of me, Juan, were I to leave thee and Spain for ever, to dwell in some desert with this Circe of my love? Wouldst thou forgive me? Would my father pardon me? Yet why do I speak of him, who never threw away a gentle word upon the son of his dead Theresa? He was an ingrate to love, an apostate from his old affection, and I have still enough of my proud mother's Castilian spirit in me, to assist me to this indignant reproach. Farewell, Juan! farewell! Shouldst thou not receive another letter soon from me, look to hear that I am gone over to the Hesperian islands, where now no "unenchant-ed" dragon watches; or else that I have begun my pilgrimage into the sunset wildernesses, where man has no enemy but the snake and the panther, and love no termination but the grave!'

It was about the time of writing this letter, that the student left his home at Padua, never to return. The old landlady wondered, as I have said, and her daughter, the pretty Lorenza, sighed to think that so sweet and noble a youth should leave her without a word at parting. She had let her heart wander too often towards him, and her pity would soon have risen into love. But he disappeared, and she grieved like a

gentle woman for him, through many and many a day, and at last awoke from her love delusion as from a dream.

Nothing certain was ever heard, after this period, of Cornelia Minotti or the Spanish student. But the captain of a Leghorn trader, who had been obliged to make a voyage to America, and had been up the country as far as Montreuil, stated that a young couple, answering their description, had some years before arrived at that city, and had afterwards purchased a section of land in the neighborhood. Upon this land they had built a small house, where they lived very secluded, never coming even to Montreuil except upon some very urgent occasion. The man, he said, was about thirty years of age, tall and of an olive complexion, with a seriousness of aspect which seemed to denote constitutional melancholy. The woman (who appeared about the same age) was extremely pale, but possessed a commanding figure, and a lustrous expression in her eyes that he had never seen equalled. They were, he understood, quite unoffending people, though reserved, charitable to the poor settlers and people around them, and, above all, appeared to entertain towards each other the most romantic and extravagant affection.

1823.

A SHORT MYSTERY.

IN the village of Rubeland (which is situate in the Lower Hartz, in the county of Reinstein) there are superstitions enough to satisfy a poet or a monk. There is not an old man who has not a goblin story to tell for every white hair that is left on his foolish head; and there is not a village girl who will go to sleep, on any night between Michaelmas and Easter, without mumbling a prayer for protection against the elves and dwarfs of the country.

I am ashamed to say it, (for it is my native place,) but there is not perhaps a more ignorant and idle set of people than is to be found in this same village of Rubeland. It is like a spot on which the light of Heaven has never shone; dark, melancholy, and superstitious. The inhabitants work a little (and lazily) in the morning, in order to earn a miserable meal, and at night they bewilder their weak brains with telling and listening to stories about goblins and fairies, which would make a man of the world absolutely die with laughter to hear. The only excuse for them is, that their fathers and grandfathers up to the flood have been all as foolish as themselves. I never heard of a phi-

losopher having been born in Rubeland ; no, not one. One fellow, indeed, who called himself an orator, and who had tolerable success as a travelling tinker and mountebank, claimed it as his native place : and a poor youth, who slept all day for the purpose of writing nonsense-verses at night, was certainly born there ; but no one else who can be called even remarkable.

It is a singular fact that my great uncle Wilhelm should have chosen the neighborhood of this village to live in ; but so it was. My uncle Wilhelm (the reader doubtless has often studied his learned productions) was professor of medicine in the colleges of Gottingen. It was he who made such a noise throughout all Germany, twenty years ago, by his famous papers on the disease *hypochondriasis*, as every body knows. During the winter months, and indeed during those parts of spring and autumn which verge upon winter, he dwelt at Gottingen in quality of professor ; but in the full summer season he shut up his laboratory, and came to enjoy quiet and breathe the fresh air of the country, in the neighborhood of our village of Rubeland.

My uncle was a sad sceptical fellow in some things. He laughed at the great ghost of the *Hartz* mountains — the magic tower of *Scharzfeld* — the dwarf-holes of *Walkenried* — the dancing pool — the devil's wall — the copper kettles of the elves, and all the rest of the infernal machinery of the little spirits ; and positively roared himself into an asthma, and affronted three of the richest burghers of Blankenburg by the ridicule which he cast upon the idol *Pustrich* or *Spit-fire* to their faces. My uncle, moreover, cared nothing for

people only two inches and a half high. He had enough to do, he protested, with the larger race of fools : but the little ones he left to the pigmy doctors, of whom he had no doubt but that there was a large number. It was natural, he said, that it should be so : it was as natural that there should be found doctors where there was plenty of patients, as that in places where there was a multitude of cabbages and fruit, there should be (as there always is) a plentiful stock of caterpillars and grubs.

But my purpose is not, at present, to give a detail of my uncle Wilhelm's opinions, some of which might shock the tender-minded reader ; but simply to rescue an anecdote, which I have heard him relate, from unmerited oblivion. 'I was going,' said he—but I believe I must still keep him as the third person singular. I can manage the matter better in that way, and the reader will excuse me.

It was on a wet evening, then, in the month of September 17—, that an elderly man, respectably dressed, stopped at the little inn of the village of Rubeland. On dismounting, he gave particular directions to the ostler to be careful of his nag (a stout little roadster), and proceeded straight to the kitchen fire, where he disencumbered himself of his outer coat and boots, and ordered the private room to be made ready for his reception. The landlady bustled about to do his bidding, while the stranger sat down quietly among the boors who crowded round the great kitchen fire, some of whom offered him the civility of the better seats, but he rejected all with a silent shake of the head, and in fact appeared to be occupied with any thing but what was

going on around him. At last, his valise having been unstrapped and brought in, some idea or other occurred to his recollection, and he opened one of the ends of the 'leathern convenience,' and took thereout a bulky object, containing a variety of curious instruments. These he examined, wiping some and breathing upon others, and displaying all to the wondering eyes of the peasants, who were not long in coming to the conclusion that he was a conjuror of no common acquirements. The stranger, however, did not observe their astonishment. Indeed, it is very doubtful whether he remembered that any one was near him; for he quoted once or twice a Latin sentence, pressed a concealed spring or two in some of the instruments, which shot out their steel talons at his touch, and in a word performed such other marvels, as occasioned a considerable sensation among his spectators. If the truth must be told, they all huddled together more closely than before, and avoided coming in contact even with the tail of his coat.

All this could not last long, the more especially as the little busy landlady had done her best in the mean time to get the stranger's room in order, and which she announced as being ready at the very moment that he was in the midst of a Latin soliloquy. This he cut short without ceremony on hearing the news, took up his valise, instruments, &c., and quitted the kitchen for the parlor.

And now came the time for conjecture. '*What could the stranger be? — a magician? — an ogre? — a ——*' but they waited to see whether or not he would order two or three little children to be roasted for

supper before they resolved upon their conclusions. In the course of a minute or two he rang his bell, and, to their great disappointment, ordered a fowl and a bottle of wine to be got ready ; — absolutely nothing more. This perplexed the Rubelanders almost as much as the curious instruments which he had exhibited. On consideration, however, they thought that the stranger's caution had probably put a rein upon his appetite, and that he had contented himself for once with vulgar fare.

But it is not my intention to speculate on all the speculations which entered into the heads of the villagers of Rubeland. It is sufficient for my present purpose to state, that by a natural turn of conversation the villagers began to consider how they might best turn the visit of the stranger to account. Some proposed that he should sow the great common with florins, another that he should disclose where the great pots of money lay that were hid by the elves, when a band of those malicious wretches was dispersed by Saint Somebody during the time of Henry the Fowler. At last old Schwartz, the only man who had a glimmering of common sense in the room, suggested that he should be requested to visit the cottage of young Rudolph, who lay tormented with visions and spirits, about a mile off the village. And the reason why Schwartz proposed this was, as he said, ' because he observed the old gentleman put his hand upon the pulse of the landlady's daughter, and keep it there as though he were in count, at the time he left the kitchen. Although this was a sad descent from the florins and pots of gold, the influence of Schwartz was considerable among his

fellows, and he finally prevailed. The stranger was petitioned to visit the pillow of Rudolph, and the sick man's state described to him. He immediately and almost joyfully consented. He only stipulated for the two wings and breast of the chicken, and half a dozen glasses of Grafenburg, and then he said 'he should be ready.'

I must now transport the reader from the little inn of Rubeland to the cottage of Rudolph, the patient. He will imagine the stranger recruited by a good supper and some excellent Grafenburg wine, and see him seated by the bedside of the young peasant, holding his wrist gently in one hand, and inquiring cheerfully into the nature of his ailment. Although he could get no definite answer on this point, Rudolph was ready enough to tell his story, and the stranger very wisely let him proceed. If the reader can summon up as much patience as the stranger did, he may listen to the present narrative. These are the very words, — (for the stranger, being a plain-spoken man, thought it well to note down the particular words of the sufferer, in order to show the strength of the impressions which had been made upon his brain) : —

'It was a stormy night on which I married Elfrid, the widow's child. We had been made one by the priest at the neighboring church, just before twilight; and during the ceremony my bride shivered and turned aside from the holy water, and her eyes glistened like the lights of the glow-worm, and when it was ended she laughed aloud. The priest crossed himself; and I, while my heart sank within me, took home the beauty of the village.

‘No one knew how the mother of Elfrid had lived. She dwelt in a fair cottage, round which wild flowers blossomed, and the grape-vines ran curling like green serpents. She was waited on by an old Spanish woman, but never went abroad. She paid regularly for every article which she bought, and spent freely though not prodigally. Some said that she received a pension from the Elector of ———; others that strange noises were heard on the quarter days in her house, and that her money was paid at midnight !

‘She had only one child,—Elfrid ; a pale and melancholy girl, whose eyes were terribly lustrous, and whose hair was dark as the plumage of the raven. She walked with a slow majestic pace : she seldom spoke ; but when she spoke, it was sweetly though gravely ; and she sang sometimes, when the tempest was loudest, in strange tones which seemed almost to belong to the winds. Yet she was gentle, charitable, and, had she frequented the village church, would have been universally beloved. I became the lover of the widow’s child. I loved her first one stormy autumn—I forget how many moons ago—but it was soon after I received this wound in the forehead by a fall in the Hartz. I was dissuaded from marrying her, for I had deserted a tender girl for her ; but my mad passion prevailed, and I took my young wife, Elfrid, home, to a cottage on the banks of the solitary Lake of Erloch.

‘Come near me, my sweet bride,’ I said ; but she sat with her hands clasped upon her knees, and looked upward, yet half aside, as though she were trying to distinguish some voice amidst the storm. “‘Tis only the raging of the wind, my love,” said I. “Hush !”

answered she, "this is my wedding song. Why is my brother's voice not amongst them?" And she sate still, like a shape of alabaster, and the black hair streamed over her shoulders; and methought she looked like that famous Sibyl who offered to the proud Tarquin her terrible books. And I began to fear lest I had married a dæmon of the air; and sometimes I expected to see her dissolve in smoke, or be borne off on the wings of the loud blast.

'And so she sate for a long time, pale and speechless; but still she seemed to listen, and sometimes turned a quick ear round, as though she recognised a human voice. At last the wind came sighing, and moaning, and whining through the door and casements, and she cried — "Ho, ho! are you there, brother? It was well done, indeed, to leave my husband here, without a song at his wedding." And she smiled, and clapped her hands, and sang — oh! it was like a dirge — low, humming, indistinct noises seemed to proceed from her closed lips; and her cheeks brightened, and her eyes dilated, and she waved her white hand up and down, and mimicked the rising and falling of the wind.

'We were alone in our lonely cottage. I know not how it was, but we were alone. My brothers had not come to me, and my sister lay at home ill. "'Tis a wild night, my lovely Elfrid," said I; and she smiled and nodded, and I ran my fingers through her dark hair; and while I held up a massy ringlet, the wind came and kissed it till it trembled. "Oh! are you there?" said my bride; and I told her I had lifted up the black lock: but she said that it was not I, but *another*.

‘Then we heard the sobbing and swelling of the lake, and the rushing of the great waves into the creeks, and the collecting and breaking up of the billows upon the loose pebbly shore. And sometimes they seemed to spit their scorn upon the winds, and to lash the large trunks of the forest trees. And I said, “I almost fear for thee, my Elfrid, for the lake sounds as though it would force its banks,” — and she smiled. “The spirits of the water are rebellious to-night,” exclaimed she: “their mistress, the moon, is away, and they know not where to stop. Shall we blow them back to their quiet places?” I replied that it would be well, were it possible; and she lifted up her hand, and cried “Do ye hear?” — and the wind seemed to answer submissively; and then suddenly it grew loud, and turned round and round like a hurricane, and we heard the billows go back, and back — and the lake seemed to recede, and the waters grew gentle, and then quiet; and at last there was deep and dark silence all around me and my bride.

‘And then it was that I lighted a torch, and our supper was spread. The cold meats and dainties were laid upon a snow-white cloth, and the bright wines sparkled like the eyes of Elfrid. I took her hand and kissed her, but her lips felt like the cold air. “Rudolph, my fond husband,” said she, “I am wholly thine; but thou hast not welcomed me hither with a song. It is the custom where I was born, and I must not be wholly thine without it.” — “What shall I sing?” inquired I. “Oh!” said she, “the matter may be what you please, but the manner must be mine. Let it be free thus — thus” — (and she sang a strange burial chant) — “thus,

— rising and falling like the unquiet tempest.” I essayed a few words — but they were troubled and spiritless —

“ My love, my love, so beautiful, so wise !
I’ll sing to *thee*, beneath the dawning moon;
And blow my pastoral reed
In the cold twilight, till thine eyes shine out
Like blue stars sparkling in thy forehead white.
I’ll sing to *thee*, until thy cloudy hair
Dissolve before my kisses pure and warm.
Oh ! as the rose-fed bee doth sing in May,
To thee, my January flower, *I’ll* sing
Many a winter melody,
Such as comes sighing through the bending pines,
Mournfully, — mournfully,
And through the pillar’d beeches stripped of leaves
Makes music, till the shuddering water speaks
In ripples on the trembling forest’s shores — ”

“ Away ! ” said my bride, interrupting my song, — “ Away !

Thou hast wed the wind, thou hast wed the air —
Thy bride is as false as fair : —
As the dew of the dawn
Beneath the sun,
Is her life, which beginneth afresh
When day is done.
I am fashion’d of water and night,
Of the vapor that haunts the brain —
I die at the dawn of light,
But at eve — I revive again !
Like a spirit who comes from the rolling river,
Changing for ever, — for ever, — ever ! ”

And she muttered again, and again — “ for ever, ” —
and “ ever ! ” And even as she sang, methought her
long arms grew colder, and longer, and clasped me
round and round, like the twining of the snake or the

lizard. I shrank from her in terror, when she laughed once more in her unearthly way, and showed her white teeth in anger. "Dost thou not love me, Elfrid?" said I; — and she laughed again, and a thousand voices, which then seemed to invest our cottage on every side, laughed fiercely and loudly, till our dwelling shook to its centre. "Ah, ha! dost thou hear them?" said she — "Love thee! Can the wind love thee? — or the air? — or the water? Can fire delight in thee? But, ay: *that*, with its flickering voice and curling tongue, may embrace thee, as it clasps the heretic martyrs; but no further. The elements are above thee, thou youth of clay! Why wouldst thou tempt them, fond thing, by linking thy short life to their immortality?" And as she spoke, she kissed me for the first time with her chilling lips, and whispered over me, and I sank shivering into another life.

'And in this state I have seen more than ever met the eye of man. I have seen the rack stoop down, and the whirlwind pause, and the stars come about me, by hundreds and thousands, hurrying and glancing. Dumb nature has spoken before me, and the strange language of animals has become clear. I have looked (as the Dervise did) into the hollow earth, and there beheld dull metals and flaming minerals, gold and rubies, silver, and chrysolites, and amethysts, all congregated in blazing heaps. I have seen the earthquake struggling in his cavern like a beast. I have communed with unknown natures, and sate by the Dropsy and the awful Plague. And once methought we went out — I and my bride — into some forest which had no end, and walked among multitudes

— millions of trees. The broad great oak was there, with his rugged trunk and ponderous arms, which he stretched out over us: the witch elms waved and whispered, and the willow fawned upon us and shook its dishevelled hair: we heard the snake rustling in the grass, and saw his glittering eyes and leper's coat; and he writhed and curled before us on our path, as though some unseen dominion were upon him; and the owl laughed at us from his hole; and the nightingale sang in the pine: and some birds there were which gave us welcome, and hundreds chattered in the abundance of their joy. All this while my bride was silent, and paced slowly beside me, upon the greensward. And she never lifted her pallid face from the ground, though I asked earnestly, again and again, how it was that the brute creatures had awakened from their dumb trance, and stood up before us with the intelligence of man!

‘Once, in every month, when the white moon grows round, and casts down her floods of cold light upon the fields and rivers, until the waters dance and the branches quiver with intense delight, *She* comes to my bedside, and still bends over me. Then, while I lie motionless, though away, she kisses my lips with so cold a kiss, that methinks I am frozen inwards to the heart. And my head — my head is a burning ball — ha, ha! — you should come to me when the moon is ripe. *Then* you shall see the gambols of the water-elves — and the spirits who ride upon the storm-winds — and the mermen, — and the unnatural sights of the deep black ocean — and the HELL that is always about

me! Will you come, and look at the wonders which I will show you? Will you come —'

'Let me look upon your forehead,' said the stranger, when the faintness which here seized Rudolph had put an end to his tale. 'Methinks the error is *here*, rather than in the moon.'

'Is there any hope that I shall be disenchanted?' inquired the youth faintly.

'We will see,' replied the stranger. 'You must have patience and water-diet. You must be obedient, too, to those whom I shall bid attend you; and — but at present we will tie a string round your arm and see of what color is the blood of an elf.'

'Shall I be free?' reiterated the youth; 'I have cursed ——'

'Have you prayed?' asked my uncle Wilhelm; (for *he* was, as will be remembered, the stranger of the inn) — 'have you prayed?'

'That never occurred to me,' said the young peasant, as his blood ran freely upon the puncture of my uncle's lancet — 'that certainly never occurred to me; but I will try.'

'In the mean time,' observed my uncle, 'I will do my best; and it shall go hard but we will conquer the elves.'

And, in fact, my uncle Wilhelm *did* finally prevail. The peasant Rudolph recovered, and wedded the girl whose society he had once forsaken. What became of Elfrid, or whether she existed at Rubeland, or elsewhere, I never was able to learn. Perhaps, after all, she was but a fiction — a distinct one, un-

doubtedly — but, probably, like many others of the spirits of the Hartz: nay, it is not impossible, even, but that she may have arisen from that very tumble which our friend Rudolph had amongst those celebrated mountains.

‘A lancet, a blister, and a gallon or two of barley-water,’ my uncle Wilhelm used to assert, ‘would put to flight the most formidable band of elves or spirits that ever infested a German district;’ and, to say truth, I begin almost to renounce my old faith in those matters, and to come round to my uncle’s opinion.

1823.

THE PORTRAIT ON MY UNCLE'S SNUFF- BOX.

AN ANECDOTE.

WE were sitting over our wine, one winter's evening, about six or seven years ago, in the old oak parlor, at my uncle's house in Cheshire. We had drawn our chairs round the hearth, upon which some crackling faggots were blazing; and formed a semicircle of merry hearts, as well disposed to enjoy ourselves and our host's twenty-years-old port, as perhaps had ever met together. The chestnuts were hot, the claret (true Lafitte) was first uncorked, and breathed out its delicious odors, like a liquid nosegay. The Madeira, which had been tossed about in the Indian seas till it had grown as old as a nabob, had made one circuit of the company. In short, we had just settled ourselves comfortably, and were beginning to compliment the Colonel upon the flavor of his mutton, (his own killing,) when one of the party took notice of a portrait upon the family snuff-box, that was performing the usual course round the table.

‘ ’Tis the portrait of my grandfather, Walter Bethel,’ said my uncle.

‘It wears a clever, lively look,’ observed the other.

‘True,’ replied my uncle. ‘Nevertheless, in his youth, he was subject to great fluctuation of spirits; and indeed, at one time, was in a state of despondency. This, as will readily be imagined, was owing to — love. Love! the Urchin! the God! the theme of poets! the scorn of philosophers! after conquering Cæsar and Antony, and converting popes and priests to the religion of the laity, suddenly stooped from his altitudes, and pounced upon the heart of Mr. Walter Bethel.’

‘There is a family story,’ said I, ‘connected with the old gentleman’s love-suit. You have once or twice threatened to tell me the particulars, if you recollect, and stopped only because there was a dearth of listeners. Why not let us hear them now?’

The company seconded my suggestion as clamorously as could be desired; whereupon my uncle, after the due number of excuses expected on such occasions, detailed to us the following facts. I shall take the liberty of using Colonel Bethel’s own words; so that the reader will imagine that he hears him speaking.

‘The parents of my grandfather,’ he began, ‘were stout Hanoverians. Their professions of loyalty and Protestantism were not merely lip-deep matters. They were loyal and Protestant to the backbone, — to the core of the heart, — to wherever else the recess is, where integrity (or rather falsehood) is supposed to lurk. They drank the health of King George and the Protestant ascendancy in endless bumpers of stern March beer. They propagated their principles among their friends; they whipped them into their children; *they taught them to their servants.* Little tottering

urchins, a foot high, who were learning "their duty to their neighbor," learned, at the same time, to hate a Jacobite with all their heart and with all their strength. Their first lesson, when they got into three syllables, was, "D — nat — n to the house of Stuart!" In other respects, their education was not conducted on a strict plan. In regard to my grandfather, who was in his later years (I am sorry to say) an occasional swearer, — he always traced his infirmity to his having been encouraged at three years old to bawl forth, "C — e the Pretender!" He derived this small accomplishment from the stable-boy, and it was considered dangerous to attempt to extinguish it by reproof. "We may pull up the flower and the weed together," said his father : so my grandfather remained somewhat of a swearer.

'In the year 1746, his parents dwelt and had dwelt for some years near the small town of Calne, in Wiltshire. At present, this place is remarkable for little else than certain clothiers' manufactories, which supply fashionable tailors and ambitious beaux with the bluest and best of cloth. A little puzzling, brawling rivulet, called the Marden, intersects the town, and assists in turning various fulling or clothing mills ; which, in requital for its services, bestow upon it large quantities of deep blue dye, putting to shame not only the skies above but even the brilliant water-color drawings of which young ladies, and their parents, are sometimes so justly proud. The inhabitants of Calne are quiet, industrious people. They talk politics but little, play at whist capitally, and have the best strong beer in the world. I do not know who is the parson, or the doctor, or the lord of the manor ; but the lawyer (Mr.

A——n) is one of the best-hearted and clearest-headed men that even the law can boast of.

‘Circumstances, which it is unnecessary to trouble you with at present, transferred our family from Wiltshire to Cheshire, about fifty summers ago. But in the year 1743,—4,—5, and 6, they dwelt on the banks (as the novelists say) of the Marden, within the suburbs of the town of Calne. At that day politics ran high throughout the country; and in Calne, they ran higher than in other places. The tailor, the butcher, the baker were afflicted with the epidemic. The less people had to do with the matter, the more furious they became. A leash of tailors, and a brace of bakers, (stitched and kneaded up together and called “The Club,”) determined to settle the question in favor of the house of Hanover. A bunch of gardeners opposed them on the Stuart side. Each man was for “the right,” and for that reason they all neglected their business, and in twelve months were supported at the expense of the parish. This they called suffering for their country. But the people on *both* sides suffered for their country, which was odd enough. Yet their country never knew it till this moment, when I unwillingly proclaimed its ingratitude. However, there were some more efficient adherents to the house of Stuart and Hanover, as will be supposed. Among these was a Mr. Campbell, a Scotchman by birth, an advocate by education, (he had retired from the bar on a small fortune,) and as completely cased in Jacobitism as the king of Denmark was in steel, namely, “from top to toe.”

‘*It is a little singular, that this gentleman should*

become the intimate friend of loyal Mr. Bethel, a Protestant : but so it was. Matters of opinion, to be sure, interfered occasionally with this intimacy, and political jars sometimes even threatened to shake the foundations of their friendship, but on the whole they went on pretty smoothly, and had a most sincere respect for each other.

‘As Mr. Bethel, the Hanoverian, had a son, (my grandfather who was heir of his acres,) so Mr. Campbell the Jacobite had a daughter, as fair as Eve, and the sole stay and solace of his home. What was to be expected in such a case ? My grandfather fell over head and ears in love. He was at the mature age of sixteen ; so he declared himself, and was — refused ! If the river Marden had been deep enough, the line of Bethel had perhaps been extinct. Fortunately, it is only a little rippling stream, and being thereabouts not more than four feet deep, was insufficient for the purposes of the most desperate of lovers. My grandfather probably felt this ; for after a week’s deliberation, he postponed his intended suicide to an indefinite period, or, as the parliamentary reporters say, “*sine die*.” In the interim, he wisely set seriously to study, and after two years of unflinching reading, he was sent abroad to travel, and remained in foreign countries two or three years more. Some time after his departure Mr. Campbell was called suddenly to Scotland, upon some private business, relating, as he intimated, to a small patrimony which he possessed in that country.

‘It was about this time (viz. in 1745) that the Chevalier, Charles Edward, made his unsuccessful attempt on the crown of England. I am not about to fatigue

you with the particulars of this expedition ; they are known to every one now, since the publication of the memoirs of Mr. Fergus Mac-Ivor and the celebrated Baron of Bradwardine. I must tell you, however, that among the adherents of the house of Hanover, there was not one so indignant at this invasion of the country, as the father of Mr. Walter Bethel. He strapped his sword (a huge Toledo) round his loins, furbished up a horrible, wide-mouthed blunderbuss ; stuck a brace of brass-mounted pistols in his belt, and swore frightfully, both by St. George and the Dragon, that he would cut off the ears of the first rebel who dared to violate the sanctity of the county of Wilts. Had he lived farther northward, there must have been bloody noses between Mr. Stephen Bethel and the Jacobites. As it was, his anger exhausted itself in words ; a fortunate event for the heroes in phillibegs and tartans, and not altogether unlucky perhaps for my great-grandfather.

‘ During the absence of Campbell, his daughter lived in the house of Mr. Bethel. My grandfather being at this time absent on his travels, there was no objection to this arrangement on her part ; and the young lady being a Protestant (the religion of her deceased mother), Mr. Bethel felt no apprehension that his sober family could be tainted by the scarlet principles of the woman of Babylon.

‘ When Mary Campbell rejected the hand of my grandfather, he was, as I have said, some sixteen years of age, and she herself, being as old within twelve months, looked down naturally enough upon the *pretensions* of so young a lover. Two or three years,

however, spent in studying books at home, (during which time he forbore to see her,) and more than two years devoted to the study of man abroad, converted Mr. Walter Bethel into a promising cavalier, and made wonderful alterations in the opinions of the lady. At the time of my grandfather's return, Mary Campbell was a resident in his father's house, and when the old gentleman, after embracing his son, led him up to his fair guest, with "You remember my son Walter, my dear Miss Campbell," Miss Campbell was ready to sink with confusion. A little time, however, sufficed for her recovery, and she received my grandfather's courtesies as gracefully as any body could be expected to do who had "never seen the Louvre." Walter Bethel felt this. He saw a distinction, a shade indeed between his former favorite, and the pretty Madame la Comtesse de Frontac, and La belle Marquise de Vaudrecour, but on the whole he was well satisfied, and it must be added, not a little surprised also. For Time, which had been so busy in lavishing accomplishments on the head of Mr. Walter Bethel, having had a little leisure to spare from that agreeable occupation, had employed it very advantageously in improving the mind and person of Mary Campbell. Perhaps this might be for the purpose of once more entrapping her lover's heart. Perhaps — but it is not easy to speak as to this. The result of her improvement, however, was very speedily seen. My grandfather fell over head and ears again in love; and this time he was destined to be successful.

'He had not been four-and-twenty hours at home before his "Miss Campbell" expanded into "My dear Miss Campbell." This, in a week, dwindled into

"Mary," which in its turn blossomed into half a dozen little tender titles, such as are to be found in any page of Cupid's calendar, with very expressive epithets appended to each. I have heard him tell the story of his offering his hand and heart to my grandmother, while the good old lady sate with smiling shining eyes at his side, listening to his rhapsodies, as pleased, I verily believe, as she could have been when the offer was actually made to her, forty or fifty years before.

"When I was between sixteen and seventeen," he would say, addressing my grandmother, "You would not hear me attempt a single compliment." "Oh! pardon me," replied she, laughing, "I heard many attempts; the objection was, that you never succeeded." "Tut! Tut!" retorted the old gentleman; "old age has injured your faculties. You must not believe her, grandson," continued he, "for besides composing two long sets of hexameters in her praise, I turned at least half a dozen compliments (to as many distinct perfections) in the manner of Ovidius and Horatius Flaccus. But it all would not do. I verily believe that I should have made no impression upon her, had I actually proposed to her in Latin. Yet observe, my dear Walter," said the old gentleman impressively; "when I returned from France and Italy, things wore a different aspect. If I sighed, she sighed too. If I spoke softly, she looked down and answered piano. If I pronounced an opinion, she acquiesced. In short, from the very hour of my return, till the morning I kissed her behind the parlor door, and forced from her a confession that she

returned my regard, I was a happy, impudent, thriving lover."

'I could tell you fifty anecdotes of his wooing time; for he loved in his old age to dilate upon it, and in fact sent me to sleep, times infinite, with his stories, seldom perceiving, in his exultation, how indifferent a listener he had, until he arrived at the conclusion of his tale. I do not, however, mean to inflict even one of these stories upon you. My grandfather had returned about three months from his travels, and was absolutely basking in the sunshine of Mary's eyes, when Campbell (who had been long absent) returned suddenly and unexpectedly from Scotland. He had formerly been a tall, ruddy, athletic man, but he came back worn to the bone, pale, attenuated, and drooping. He had never given up the idea, that one day or other the House of Stuart would be restored to what he called "its rights;" and when the invasion of Charles Edward, which had excited such mad expectation, ended in the utter discomfiture of himself and his adherents, Campbell could scarcely bear up against his great disappointment. It was asserted (and not contradicted) that his journey to Scotland had been a mere pretext; that he had been actually in the thick of the fights of Preston, Falkirk, and Culloden, and had been forced to flee for his life and to hide in caves, and brakes, and desert places, from the insatiable fury of the English troopers.

'He escaped at last, however, and arrived at Calne; not free from molestation, indeed, for within four and twenty hours of his return, news arrived of the ap-

proach of a detachment, sent, as it was said, to scour the country of rebels, and charged with particular instructions to seize upon our unhappy Jacobite. The soldiers were luckily less eager than their government for the apprehension of rebels. They had already made a glorious march from Oxford to Marlborough, without opposition, not an enemy daring to show himself; and content with the bloodless victory, they "sate down" before the Dolphin, at Marlborough, as though they were to take it by regular siege. The landlord, however, yielded up his barrels without a parley. His beer ran like a river, the soldiers drank it gallantly, and all thoughts of the Jacobites were speedily dismissed. This could not last for ever; and, indeed, so thought the government, for they dispatched a peremptory mandate for their heroes to break up their quarters and proceed to business, and the unwilling heroes accordingly prepared to obey.

'Meantime, the state of Calne was in commotion. As soon as the news arrived that a file of red-coats were about to quit the tap at Marlborough, where they had been nourishing their valor for a week, by drinking success to the Duke of Cumberland, (whose campaigns were over,) all the good people of Calne were presently in full debate. Some were indignant, because they were Jacobites; others, because they were Constitutionalists; some were indifferent because they were ignorant, and some because they were philosophical. The most of them were, however, what the government circulars call "animated with the best intentions," and all were inclined to talk. Mr. Stephen Bethel would, no doubt, have been amongst the fore-

most and loudest of the place, had he not at that instant been otherwise occupied. The news reached Mrs. Bethel, instead of himself, and the consequence was what the lawyers call a "stoppage *in transitu*." She was unlike other women. She had no care for news, but was content with being a fat, good-humored, old-fashioned lady, who made the best gooseberry wine in the county. Her husband, Mr. Stephen Bethel, derived the only joke that he was ever known to possess, from her virtues. "She was the only belle," he said, "that he had ever known without a clapper." So he talked enough for both.

'But when the news actually *did* come to his ears, nothing could surpass his indignation. A rebel! A Jacobite! He resolved to make one in the chase, and if possible, to be in at the death. He called to John and Thomas, to William and Harry, and the rest: he loaded his great blunderbuss; he strapped on his long sword; he even went so far as to have his horse's tail clipped for the occasion, when my grandfather, who had taken things more quietly, inquired of him, in a whisper, if it were likely that the person whom the red-coats were in search of could be, by any possibility, Mr. Campbell. Mr. Stephen Bethel actually bounded from the ground at the suddenness of this question. Fat as he had long been, he positively jumped up with alarm. "It is impossible," said he to my grandfather. "What! Mary's father? It can't *be*, Walter!" But Walter thought otherwise.

'Mr. Stephen Bethel and his son were, therefore, at issue. This had happened not unfrequently before; but in former cases the father always conquered. If he

were not the stoutest in argument, he was at least the first in authority; and he never failed to back his words by some indications of his power. His commands were added to his arguments, and his son (as dutiful sons should do) generally acquiesced. Besides, Mr. Stephen Bethel could be a little vituperative at times. He did not excel in panegyric; but in abuse he was as strong as a tempest. His flowers of rhetoric flew about on such occasions, with a violence that nothing could equal, save the blast of anger that produced them. At present he was not inclined to be so peremptory, or his son to be so obedient. In short, notwithstanding the denial of the former, he felt that his friend Campbell was in danger; and now came the question, how to act? He could not betray his friend? No, his whole soul rejected such base treachery. Neither could he betray his sovereign to Mr. Campbell? No, his loyalty cried out against that also. Nevertheless, if there *was* to be a struggle between these rival feelings, he began for the first time to fear that friendship might turn out predominant.

“Well, Walter, my boy,” said the father to his son, after a long pause, and looking somewhat sheepishly, “what *is* to be done?”

“I think,” replied Walter, “we had better send him off to my aunt’s, at Kilmarton. If he were well covered with one of your wigs, Sir —”

“Eh! what? zounds!” exclaimed the other, “Do you think, Sir, that I’ll be accessory — do you think that I (a Bethel!) will help to conceal any one of King George’s rascally enemies? Do you think —?” Mr. Stephen Bethel was lashing himself up with words as

the lion does with his tail; and there was no knowing how long he would have gone on with his "Do you think," or in fact, whether he ever would have stopped, had not my grandfather very naturally, and at the same time a little ingeniously exclaimed "Poor Mary! what will she not suffer!"

'Mr. Stephen Bethel was calm in a moment. We have heard how a cannon-ball will suddenly put an end to the most violent discussion; how the ducking-stool will all at once quell the else untameable tongue of the scold; but "Poor Mary!"—it was the oil upon the ocean of his wrath. He was conquered and quiet in an instant.

"To sure," said he faltering, "Poor Mary!—poor girl," added he, almost whimpering,—" 'tis a pity, that such a creature should suffer for the errors of her father. As to him, a foolish, obstinate, headstrong Jacobite! But King George is at his heels—King George or King George's men, and now we shall hear whether he'll sing 'The Cammels are coming;' or cry "King James and Proud Preston' again!"

'And so the old gentleman veered about, from pity to wrath, from loyalty to friendship and back again; friendship, however, got the better at last, and he set about helping Campbell in good earnest. Walter was allowed to convey to Campbell an intimation of his danger; not that the father desired this in so many words, but, as he did not absolutely prohibit it, his son interpreted his silence to his own purposes, and proceeded to the house of the unlucky rebel.

'The first object that struck his sight on entering Campbell's house, was Mary herself evidently in deep

distress. "My dearest Mary," said he, putting his arm gently round her waist.

"Oh, Walter," replied she, sobbing, "my father! my poor father! That unfortunate expedition of the Prince ——"

"Of the Pretender?" said Walter, inquiringly.

"Do not carp at words," replied she. "What does it matter whether he be Prince or Pretender, now that the soldiers are coming for my dear father? Oh! he will be taken! he will be taken!" continued she, weeping and wringing her hands.

"I came to save him," said Walter. "Be comforted; where is he? Is he within?"

"He is gone," answered she. "He received the news from a friend, and had just time to escape."

"Tell me where?" said my grandfather, hastily.

"I cannot; I must not!" said she. "He charged me to keep his secret, and I must do so—even from you."

"He will be found," replied Walter, in great distress. "He will be hunted by these rascals, and found. Let him trust himself to me. I know a place where he may hide for a time, and our well known principles will assure his final safety. If the storm be once blown over, my father and uncle shall exert their interest with the Duke, and all will be well. So take heart, my dearest, and tell me, without more ado, where your father is. Tell me as you value his life."

"And she told, and she did well to tell; for, besides that Campbell's hiding-place was speedily searched, and that nothing short of the character of the Bethels

would have been sufficient to ward off the strict inquiries that were elsewhere made, it was well that the honesty of love should not be rewarded with distrust. Mary Campbell confided to her lover, not only her heart, but her father's life; and well was the confidence repaid.

'I must now give up the task of historian,' said the colonel, 'and let my grandfather tell you the rest of the story himself. It was one of his thousand and one anecdotes, and it was in these words that he was accustomed to tell the story:

"The day" (he used to begin) "on which the soldiers came on their man-hunt to Calne, was memorable for many a year. Both men and the elements seemed quarrelling with each other. The scornful Loyalist, the desperate Jacobite, stood front to front, in flaming, open defiance. The thunder muttered; the winds went raving about; and the rains, which had been falling heavily all night, and glittering in the lightning, now came down in cataracts and sheets of water. The little runnels had grown into brooks; the brooks were formidable rivers. The Marden itself, usually so unimportant, had swollen and panted long in its narrow bounds, till at last it burst over its banks, and went flooding the country round. Notwithstanding all this, the hunters prepared to pursue their prey.

"It is a fearful thing to chase even a beast that flies for its life; but to hunt the great animal, Man, must surely thrill and strike an alarm into the heart of his boldest pursuer. What! he whom we have smiled upon, whose hand we have clutched, whose cheer we have enjoyed! shall we, if he do a desperate deed

which some law forbid, strip our hearts at once of all sympathy, and track him from spot to spot — through woods and lanes, and hollows and lonely places — till he fall into the toil ? and then go home, and be content with the abstract principle of justice, and forget that we have lost a friend for ever !

“ I had got the start of the red-coats by almost half an hour, when I found that I had to encounter impediments that I had not foreseen. I had set off with scarcely any determined idea, except that of saving Campbell at all events. I took the ordinary road to the brake, where I knew that he lay concealed, striding on at my best pace ; sometimes running, sometimes toiling up slippery ascents, sometimes plunging along the plashy meadows, till my breath grew short and painful from excess of exertion. I still kept on my course, however, and had contrived to attain a lofty ridge of land, not very distant from the place of refuge, when all at once my eyes fell upon a broad waste of water, a vast turbid stream rushing at random over the low country, and above which nothing appeared but an occasional tree, and the long narrow slip of wood and copse which crowned the elevated piece of land, in which, as I concluded, my friend was hid.

“ If ever I felt real despair it was at that moment. I stopped for an instant, a dreadful instant, to think. I could not be said to deliberate. I thought quickly, intensely, with a pain piercing the very centre of my heart. In three or four seconds of time I had, with the rapidity which fear produced, considered half a dozen methods of passing the water. At last, I recol-

lected a sheep path, traversing a narrow neck of high ground reaching to the opposite of the inundation, which although apparently quite covered by the floods, might nevertheless still enable me to attain the wood. To arrive at this path, it was necessary to retrace three parts of the space which I had already travelled. I turned my steps backward, therefore, instantly, and with great efforts arrived at the bridge, on the skirts of the town, just in time to hear the roll of the drum hard by, calling the soldiers to duty. I fancied that I could almost hear the click of their firelocks, as they examined them, previously to their setting out in pursuit of Campbell. 'Twas then I forgot everything. My legs were no longer cramped; my breath, lately pent up and laboring in my breast, seemed suddenly relieved; and I ran forwards with increased speed for almost a mile, when the footsteps of a person, (about the size of Campbell,) which had made deep impressions on a piece of soft soil, arrested my attention. I saw from the direction that this person must have left the highroad at that spot, and taken to the fields. I erased the few marks as well as I could, and thrusting the spike of my leaping pole into the gravel of the road, I cleared the hedge at a bound, without leaving a single trace of my course, and took my way across the fields in pursuit of Campbell.

“For some time no steps were discernible, for my route lay over grass on which the rain was still incessantly falling. At last indications of a footmark encouraged me, and I continued to track it sometimes readily, sometimes with difficulty, (for it frequently dis-

appeared) until it led me to the very edge of the flood. The man, whoever he was, must have plunged right through the waters. Perhaps he had been carried away. But there was no time for guessing; so feeling my way with my pole, I took to the water myself. To my surprise it was shallow enough, for a while, scarcely reaching above my knees. I got on, therefore, readily enough, till I had arrived within a few yards of the wood, (the object of my labors,) when the land suddenly dipped, and I found myself in upwards of four feet of water. 'A few more steps would, I knew, place me on dry ground; so I strained onward across the current, which now ran with great force, and after a struggle or two reached the wood in safety.

“I had just caught hold of some long grass to secure my footing, when my attention was arrested by a noise at some distance. I threw myself on the bank for a single minute's rest, and heard distinctly the withered leaves and brambles crackling under a heavy tread, and the hoarse, thick breathing of some creature apparently in the last stage of exhaustion. The horrid guttural sounds, which it gave out in its agony (I heard them at the distance of a hundred yards), ring in my ears to this moment. I remembered to have heard, that in Indian or African hunts, the enormous beasts which they pursue will sometimes thus breathe out their distress before they stand at bay and die. But no such creature could be here; so I determined to follow. After a few steps, I called out, 'Who goes?' All was still in an instant.

“My way now lay across the middle of the wood, to the dingle, where I hoped to find my friend. In my

course I had to pass by a deep hollow, which was usually filled with water, and which was the haunt of the water rat, the lizard, and the frogs, who kept their court among the flags and rushes there. I had reached this place and was passing on, when a slight noise induced me to turn my head. The sound was like the cocking of a pistol; so I made haste to proclaim myself. 'It is I—'tis Walter Bethel!' called I out loudly. The words were scarcely out of my mouth, when up rose, from amidst the rushes and the green stagnant water, a phantom more hideous than Triton or Nereus in his most terrible mood. Covered to the chin with the green mantle of the pool, his clothes soaked and saturated with water, arose—with a cocked pistol in each hand, and a mouth wide open and gasping for breath—my father-in-law, Campbell! He stared like a man bewildered. 'Well!' said he, at last, 't'was all he could say. 'I am come to save you,' replied I: 'the soldiers will be here in a few minutes. Come along with me.' 'No,' replied the other: 'I'll go no further. I *can* go no further. I may as well die here. 'By——!' said I, 'you shall *not* die. Rebel or not, you are Mary Campbell's father, and while I have a sinew left you shall not be taken.' With that I took him upon my back (for I was a lusty fellow then) and carried him—I know not how—but by several efforts, I believe, to the extreme side. I was just congratulating myself on my success, when suddenly I heard the measured tramp of soldiers coming along a lane, which wound round the skirt of the copse. I had mistaken the way. I stopped immediately, and heard the word 'Halt' uttered in a tone which struck to my heart. 'They are upon us,'

whispered Campbell, 'and the only thing is to die boldly! Go, therefore, my dear Walter; and may God bless you. Tell poor Mary —' but here his voice faltered and he could only sigh out deeply, 'God bless my dear child!'

"There was no time for talking, as you will imagine. I therefore motioned him to silence and drew him with the least possible noise, away from the point of danger. He was now able to walk slowly; and that was fortunately sufficient, for the soldiers had stopped to deliberate. We kept on, at a steady quiet pace, along a sharp angle of the wood, which terminated at a point near the Bath road. Behind us the voices of the soldiers were occasionally heard, and once the report of a musket-shot a little disturbed our tranquillity. We succeeded, however, in obtaining the extreme point of the wood and were just about to emerge into the road, when a heavy plunge was heard near us like that of a person jumping from an eminence; and the whistle of a pistol bullet through the leaves, which quickly followed, reduced us to instant silence. Without uttering a syllable, I pulled Campbell down beside me, amongst the fern and rank grass that grew all about, and there lay for two or three dreadful minutes, till our enemy had passed onwards. I had flung Campbell so completely prostrate that, he averred, he was obliged to make no inconsiderable meal of fern and dock leaves, before he could breathe with comfort. However this was, we soon rose up, as soon as prudently we could do so, contrived to drop a fragment of Campbell's dress on the Chippenham road, and, after seeing our pursuers take the bait and proceed southwards, we turned our backs

upon danger and the detachment, and reached Kilmar-ton in safety."

My uncle now took up the conclusion of the tale, the latter part of which he had told in the words of Walter Bethel.

'Campbell,' resumed the Colonel, was saved. A little time sufficed, as my grandfather had predicted, to put an end to the hanging of the Jacobites. General Bethel, a firm and loyal friend of the existing government, was won over, after some entreaty to petition for the pardon of Campbell; for he was one who had been excepted out of the list of those forgiven..

"He is a flaming, furious Jacobite," said General Bethel, to his favorite, Walter, in reply to his request; "a troublesome fellow he is, Walter, and deserves to suffer."

"He is Mary's father, my dear uncle," said my grandfather insinuatingly.

"You are a fool, Walter," replied the general, tartly; "at *your* age you ought to be marching at the head of a file of grenadiers, instead of wasting your time and making love, and — Pshaw! I am ashamed of you."

"But my dear uncle" — Walter was proceeding in extenuation.

"Why don't you come up to town, sir?" inquired the general, with some sternness. "I have no doubt that I can get you a commission in a couple of months, and a company before you deserve one."

"My dear general," said his nephew once more, calmly, "I thank you for the interest that you take in me; but my ambition is for the toga — the gown. I am for civil, while you are for military fame. In the

former, perhaps, I may become the first of my house ; but in the latter I must for ever remain eclipsed by your greater reputation."

" " You are a goose, Walter," replied his uncle laughing, and pinched his ear : and Walter laughed merrily too ; for by compliment he saw that Campbell would obtain his pardon.

1828.

A DAY IN VENICE.

It sometimes happens, that a circumstance which is little better than trivial in itself, derives an interest from the simple or earnest manner of the speaker. I have heard the present Sir A—— C—— narrate a fact, of no great moment, with such dramatic effect, as to excite and maintain a thrilling interest in the mind of every person present. He reanimates an old, dead, unprofitable anecdote in a way that is really marvellous ; throwing himself, as it were, into the story, and giving it life, as the Arabian magician revived the stricken fawn, to give pleasure to the Queen whom he loved.

With something of the same talent, but with less effect, the following account of a visit made, in times past, to Venice, was related to me. The manner of telling it excited in me, at the time, no inconsiderable interest. I shall fail probably in communicating much of this ; but I will at all events not occupy any serious portion of the reader's patience. And now, as Mark Antony says, ' Lend me your ear.'

It must be upwards of forty years ago, since a lady, then rich and graceful, was travelling with her husband

to Venice. She was very young, and had been but lately married ; and she went abroad to gather happiness in whatever place it might be found. Circumstances led her to the South, and it was with a light and bounding spirit that she first trod upon the Italian ground. She descended the Southern Alps, and traversed the Milanese, by Brescia, Vicenza, Verona, Padua, and at last arrived at the famous city, Venice !

But it will be better to tell the lady's story, as nearly as may be, in her own words. Although many years have passed since last she looked at a Venetian sky, and although time may have written some marks upon a forehead which once was as fair as marble, yet the brightness of her eye and the powers of her memory still remain unimpaired ; and her narrative derives no little interest from the grace which has survived the common and more perishable beauties of youth. And indeed there is a matronly as well as a maiden beauty, equally delightful, though in a different fashion. If the reader can admit a distinction between two words usually confounded, I would say that the one is a charm and the other a spell ; the one attracts, while the other commands our worship. But he should see the lady of whom I speak. He should have the soft and distinct tones in which she recounts her little story. He should see * her white hand wave up and down as she tells of light boats ' dancing ' on the blue waves of the Adriatic, and hear her voice droop into sad solemnity, while she describes the hush of the watery streets, and the even-

* She died very lately (since the above was written) at an advanced age.

ing chant of the monks and sisters, sailing under her balcony. He should — but, as he cannot by any possibility do all this, I will try to recollect her words. It is thus (or nearly thus) that I have heard her speak :—

‘Towards the afternoon of a bright day, we left Padua, “learned Padua,” and embarked on the Brenta for Venice. The sun was riding towards the west, but he had not yet reached the point where he illuminates the sky like an Iris; he had not begun “to die like the dolphin,” but blazed out clear and glorious, and threw his dazzling lights on the vineyards and orange-groves and palladian structures which crown the banks of the Brenta. Time passed, as we glided on, and on, — meeting first a carriage boat, then a gondola, — by fields and villas, by orange and laurel trees, — and at last found ourselves on the open waters, sailing direct for St. Mark’s. The evening was now coming on, and it was not until we had approached somewhat near the city, that we saw, enveloped in a haze, and like a mirage of the desert, the towers and turrets, the domes, churches and palaces of the queenly Venice. She rose before us more like a Moorish enchantment, than a real positive Christian city. I thought first of the Fata Morgana, and believed I beheld an illusion; and then of Gulnare’s city of the sea; and half expected to meet, amongst pillars of green and gold, and fretwork of crystal, the fantastical shapes of the ocean.

‘Well, we arrived at the outskirts of Venice; gliding up the road which was marked out by stakes, while, at every stroke of the oar, the city seemed to swell, and come forth and stand more palpably before us. To

me, it looked like one huge palace, with ranges and avenues of buildings belonging to it, all cramped and crowded together upon a rock. Independently of this, there is something exceedingly imposing (as I found afterwards) in the aspect of several parts of this famous city. Its strange and mingled architecture, which is neither Arabian nor Greek, nor Gothic; the aspect and manners of its people, so different from the chattering and noise that we had left at Paris; its black gondolas and silent canals, whose sides are walled by palaces, fit for the habitation of kings, but half deserted, fill one with solemn and even melancholy thoughts. We feel oppressed, as we are oppressed by the power of antiquity, or misfortune, and worship these apparitions of vanished glory the more entirely, because they are neither existing nor substantial.

‘As we came to the first houses, (but before we entered into the deep shadow which they cast across the water,) we looked once more upon the mountains of Friuli, and saw them lifting up their huge shoulders against the crimson light of the setting sun. Another dash of the oar, and we were in — Venice !

‘The first few days showed us nothing remarkable, for Mr. — fell suddenly ill, owing to travelling under a hot sun, and I was too anxious to perform the duties of a nurse towards my husband, to waste a thought upon the wonders around us. Time and abstinence, however, soon quelled the fever which had kept my patient at home, and we then prepared to go through the weary duties of the traveller, and to inspect everything that strangers usually see. In the mean time, a *great change* had taken place in the ducal city. The

transition was like that from night to morning. We came into a place where silence and melancholy brooded, and we awoke in a world of rejoicing and song. It was the Carnival!

‘I do not mean to fatigue you with a regular detail of the ceremonies, which were observed when the Doge of Venice used to celebrate his marriage with the Ocean. You may read of these in books of travels, told in a manner that I cannot aspire to rival. I must be content with speaking of the general effect, as it related to myself.

‘I remember waking early in the morning, and from my window, which looked over the Adriatic sea, I saw the sun struggling onwards in a sea of vapor. His track appeared nearly in the point of Trieste. The waters of the gulf lay silent, stretching away south and north, a melancholy plain without life or motion. I began to augur ill of the Venetian festival, but I was agreeably disappointed. For in about an hour the god of day threw off his cloudy bondage, and looked out upon us like, what he really is in southern climates, the living wonder and paragon of the heavens. The wind began to stir and freshen, and the waves curled and broke along the shore. The distant mountains, which had before looked cold and mournful, awoke to a new life, and put on their richest colors. The people opened their windows, there was a hum of voices and laughing, and the splashing of water in the canals below. One after one, the little boats and gondolas shot out from creeks and corners, and shook their tiny streamers to the breeze; men and women, in new gay dresses, were seen; rowers and gondolieri, and holi-

day-making girls from the neighboring continent, while the servants seemed to go about blithely on their morning errands. It was clear that the day would be in our favor, and accordingly we prepared to do it honor, by displaying before the curious Venetian ladies some of the elegances of our English apparel. We had ordered a gondola to be ready early, and after we had taken our coffee, we descended to where it lay waiting our arrival.

‘The time appointed for the procession not having arrived, we bade the gondolieri row us through some of the different streets of the city, to witness the preparations that were making in all quarters from the Doge to the beggar. The English traveller who has not visited this corner of Italy, cannot have any idea of the delight of gliding along from street to street, by churches and palaces and marble houses, without an effort of his own. It is more like the motion which we enjoy (or seem to enjoy) in a dream than anything else. I lay on the soft cushions of the gondola, and from underneath the pleasant shadow which the curtains made, I looked up at the architectural splendors; at windows filled with eastern-looking women, some gazing on the boats below, some glancing at the sky, (to see if the day were likely to be overcast,) some arranging their hair, and others listening to the cavaliers who hung over them, telling tales probably as sweet and as welcome as those which were listened to in former days, in the romantic gardens of Boccaccio.

‘After some time spent in this manner, we arrived near the quay of Saint Mark’s, and found that the *procession* had commenced. The Doge, and senators

and people of rank, were already in the vessel appropriated for their reception. Thousands of persons were on the water, thousands on the quays and steps, at the corners of streets, and in the windows. Every spot of ground was alive with human creatures when the signal was given, and then — but we must borrow the pen of a friend to help us here —

“ And then

Flamed forth the Bucentaur, whose amorous sails
Kissed the low whispering winds, which made reply
Softer than echo, whilst the vessel rode
Triumphant past the watery palaces ;
Proud of its ducal load it swam, and shook
Its streamers, flaunting, whilst crowds of Venetians
Swarmed in the azure air, and ladies bright
Showered their rare glances which outflashed the sun ;
And music, like a fountain of sweet sound,
Rose up and fell, and when it died there came
A noise of footsteps near, or dashing waves,
Or voices which the time made musical.
The Prince of Venice now went forth to wed
The Ocean, — a rich bride, whose dowry filled
His insular kingdom and made proud his name ;
And in his train went thousands, following fast
In floating shells, galleys and gondolas,
While the fair Ocean her voluptuous breast
Laid bare in transport, and in waves all warm
Received her tribute, that fast-fettering ring
Which bound her bride of Venice ! ”

‘To my thinking, notwithstanding my friend’s verses, the marriage of the Doge was but a foolish ceremony. It had not the common solemnity of a conjuror’s spell. But the world of bright eyes and happy faces, the cheerful jubilee, the snatches and echoes of song

which floated about and haunted us on every side, were delightful. I was glad to return from the gorgeous Bucentaur and the grave looking senators, who soon returned from their watery wedding, to the dance, the musicians, and masquers of the carnival. There was Pulcinello in all his glory, mimics, tragedians, venders of all fruits and luxuries, idlers, and visitors from every nation. There was the Frenchman in his formal silken dress, the Armenian in his flowing robes, the Spaniard in his cloak of gravity, the Jew, the Turk, the German, the Englishman, and samples from every province and state of Italy. In truth, there was a good deal that was spirit-stirring and delightful, but, unluckily, there was nothing to recount. Our only adventure — if adventure it may be called — took place at night, and to that I will now hasten. I may state, that after several hours of amusement and fatigue, we quitted for a time the out-of-door gaiety of the city, and took refuge in our apartments. There we dined, as people who frequent carnivals should dine, took our coffee, and spent the early part of the evening quietly.

‘ We had been told, however, that the festivities of the time, which declined with the day, were resumed with treble vigor at night. In consequence of this intimation, we emerged once more from our habitation (it was now late in the evening) and went, accompanied by an Italian gentleman with whom my husband was acquainted, to a casino near Saint Mark’s. We found the company about to retire, and, in fact, they soon after disappeared, one after another, until *we alone* were left there. This was a disappointment

to us, who had come so far to see the humors of Venice; but we were speedily compensated by the arrival of some itinerant musicians who stopped before the door of the place, and began an air, in which a female voice of rare quality and compass, and a masterly hand on the violin, were conspicuous. The voice was the richest I had ever heard, although I was accustomed to Italian singing, and we all (even our Italian friend) listened with breathless pleasure, while the unseen musician warbled out one or two Venetian ballads, and an air of, I think, Marcello.

‘Some words, that dropped from our friends, induced us to think that the singers might be amateurs, who had come out to do honor to the Carnival. But on going to the door, a single glance convinced us of the unfeigned poverty of the party. They accepted, moreover, a few small pieces of coin with great readiness, and thanked us in the name of the Signor Pazzi, the master and violinist of the company. This man had the marks of having had a fine person formerly, but he was now squalid in his appearance, and his look was dissipated and ferocious. The other men were wrapped in coarse, ragged cloaks, and the women in wretched clothes, with the exception only of the young musician whom we had heard, (the “prima donna” of this forlorn band,) who wore some faded finery about her, and looked like a strolling play-girl. To do her justice, she had a picturesque air, and, I must confess, the very handsomest face I ever saw. It was somewhat of the gipsy cast, but less dark, and without the expression of fierceness which belongs to that wandering tribe. She came forward with a bewitching smile, and a courtesy that was

not inelegant, to petition for reward, when I had an opportunity of observing her. And certainly she was a most attractive person, so rich in color, (like one of Titian's pictures,) so full and flowing in shape, her dress so simple, her manners — what is the word? — alluring. Yet she was evidently a woman of inferior education, and when upon my husband paying her some compliments, which she returned with a profusion of smiles and thanks, the Signor Pazzi called her back in a rough, sullen voice, she ran to him, laughing and chattering, with an air that betrayed the peasant.

'The musicians now left us, and we prepared to return homewards. In our way thither, we had to cross an angle of the square of Saint Mark's, and we there overtook our singers. They had made a halt, probably to divide the amount of the day's earnings, and were all huddled together; the singing girl hanging upon the arm of the violin player. As we approached, the party separated, the two I have mentioned going one way and the remainder of the band in an opposite direction. They seemed to part with great glee, reminding each other of the to-morrow; and wishing their "good-nights" very clamorously. When they were about fifty yards distant, one of the larger group called out once more, "Buona notte," upon which the girl sang out in return —

"Buona notte, Idolo mio!
Buona notte, va a dormir."

in a voice of such superlative richness and sweetness, that the very air seemed thrilled with her notes, and rang like a piece of silver.

'It so happened that our course lay in the same line

as that of the itinerant pair, and we followed them accordingly towards the spot where our gondola was waiting. Silence and tranquillity were now resuming their rule. The windows and jalousies were heard to shut one after another ; a distant noise, or the voice of a single gondolier, was only (and those rarely) heard, till at last nothing was audible but our own footsteps on the marble ground. We had by this time arrived very near to our boat, and were thinking of the merriment that we had witnessed, when we heard a low, sad sound coming up out of the canals ; and a boat conveying a light at its head, was seen approaching the place of our destination. "It is a funeral," said our Italian friend ; and we stopped accordingly, nearly opposite the G——i Palace, where the coming sounds or the light seemed to have attracted attention. In a few minutes, the voices were heard distinctly, singing some dirge or melancholy song. We were observing upon its beauty, when on a sudden, a great number of lights appeared in and about the G——i Palace, which before had been wrapped in silence, and, amidst all the madness of the day of jubilee, had alone looked dark and unrejoicing.

"Good God," exclaimed our friend aloud. "It is the funeral of Olympia G——i !" The musician who stood near us seemed to start at this intelligence, and uttered a strange cry. We could only, however, hear the word "dead !" although he uttered something more.

"Holy mother," said the girl, "is she dead indeed ?"

"Peace," returned the fellow in a rough tone ; and the girl was instantly silent. The funeral procession

was now close to us, and every word of the chant was audible.

‘How divine is such sweet, sad music, heard at night! The day is fit only for bustling noises, for war and traffic and action; for quarrels and loud complaints; all these should be finished with the day. But at night, let us look at the sailing moon, or stand by the hushing water; let us hear words of love, or melancholy songs; let us dream of pleasures that we have lost, or of friends that have gone far away, for ever!

‘I cannot repeat the very words of the dirge, which was sung on that Carnival evening, but it was something very like what I am about to repeat: at all events its purport was the same. You must imagine, however, the place, the time, the stillness, the solitude, and the solemn feelings that had crept over our hearts, in order to understand the effect which the music produced upon us; and you must make some allowance for my translation, also, which is almost an extempore matter: —

“We bear her home; we bear her home!
Over the murmuring salt sea foam;
One who has fled from the war of life,
From sorrow, pains, and the fever strife.

“Noble, and young, and fair was she,
Who saileth with us on the moonlight sea;
How gentle she looked, how softly spoke!
And loved so well, but her heart was broke!

“So, we bear her along to her marble halls,
Where now no delicate footstep falls;
To the bier where a thousand torches shine,—
The last of a proud and ducal line!

"The city is gay, and the laugh is loud;
But the moon, she mourns in her silver shroud!
And the revel is mad, — but we, — *but we*
Are alone with the dead on the lonely sea!"

'The concluding verse, however, although it might have been originally true, was by this time contradicted by the silence around; notwithstanding that in some houses the gaiety of the revel still went on. As the procession stopped at the palace, in order that the boat should unload its freight, the Signor Pazzi, seemed once more much disturbed; and after one or two attempts to stand his ground, finally retreated in disorder, with his pretty companion.

"I think I recollect our violinist and his friend," said our Italian associate, as we rowed along; "and the poor lady who is dead I knew intimately. There is a little, not much to be sure, of a story respecting her," — he hesitated.

"Pray let us hear it," said I.

"I will endeavor to tell it you to-morrow," replied he, "and I will call on you about noon. In the mean time I may glean some more particulars about her;" and with these words we parted for the night.

'The next day our friend was punctual to the his appointment and gave us the following account of the deceased lady:—

"You have heard of course of the G —— i family," he began. "It has reckoned, amongst its members, doges, illustrious warriors, senators without number, besides many artists and learned men. The first who made the name famous, was Jacomo G —— i who sank the fleet of the Ottomans — in — I forgot the year —

but centuries ago: the last was Olympia G——i, whom you saw taken to her grave last night. She was the sole descendant of her house. One after another, her family and relations had all disappeared. They left her the survivor of them all; and now — not one remains!

“She was very beautiful — this poor Olympia G——i. She possessed great dignity, much grace, and a serious sweetness that I have never seen equalled in any face. With enough of pride, (as much as her rank and talent seemed to justify,) she possessed something which might be called genius. It was more than the ability that results from industry; and would, if it had been called into action, have made her undoubtedly celebrated as a poetess or painter. But unfortunately, she had enormous riches; and so she remained simply a Venetian lady. When she was a child her father and mother died, and left her to the care of a maternal relation, one of the Mancini family. He was an honorable, but a very poor man, and the allowance for life which the will of Olympia’s father gave him, in requital for the guardianship of his child, formed almost his only support.

“You may imagine that the rank and wealth and beauty of Olympia were not long without worshippers. Her hand was in fact sought by many; by nobles and even by princes. But early in life, before she well knew what love was, she had given away her heart to the son of her guardian, a young man with whom she had been brought up and who professed to return it with his own. Camillo Mancini, however, was not a person to be entrusted with hearts. He would have broken

a hundred. He was a youth of some promise originally, but with strong passions and a wilful temper; and he was utterly destitute of both principle and prudence. Being caught by the glitter of arms, he suddenly resolved to become a soldier, and entered the Austrian or some foreign service; and there, amidst the bustle and license of a military life, very speedily forgot Olympia and his love engagements. She, however, with the fine fidelity of a woman, never wavered. She received accounts of his ill conduct, (for he himself soon gave over writing,) she grieved for his excesses: relieved him more than once from poverty and ruin; went to him when he was sick or wounded; tried unweariedly to restore him to respectability and comfort, and was, in all respects, his better angel. She got tired, indeed, at last, of striving in vain to serve a thankless vagabond, and, ceasing her efforts, she immediately acquired — a foe.

“ Camillo Mancini was one of those careless spendthrifts of reputation, upon whom it is idle to waste a particle of charity. He lived solely for his own pleasure; but it was the pleasure always of to-day. No admonition of prudence, no prospect of advantage, could wean him from present enjoyment. He wished; and if the wish was within the scope of possibility, he gratified it at every risk. In a mad moment, and to please the whim of the instant, he at length actually married a young adventuress who had previously declined his offer of a ‘philosophical intimacy.’ She had, as was supposed, led a free life enough before; but a fit of prudence, as sudden as that of her lover’s folly, possessed her then; and the consequence was that she became the

wife of Camillo. This news travelled speedily to Venice. It was whispered about, and justified by falsehoods, which went so far as to defame the reputation Olympia; and these falsehoods were traced without much difficulty to Camillo himself. Olympia heard all that was said. But she suffered calmly and silently; until the slander, together with the benefits which she had conferred, became the laugh of the day, partly by the treachery of an agent and partly by Camillo's drunken boasting, and then the pity of her enemies and the 'advice' of her friends, roused her from her apparent apathy to a state of perilous excitement. It was this struggle in her mind that tended to destroy her.

“You must not suppose, however, that our young Venetian was a pining, sickly girl, who sank into the grave without an effort. On the contrary, she stood up bravely against disappointment, and looked proudly on the extinction of her brightest hopes. There is no knowing but that she might at last have conquered, (for she had good sense as well as pride,) had not sickness come in to the aid of sorrow, and completed the ruin which the other had but began. The miasma — the *mal' aria* — whatever is its name, is a fatal complaint when it attacks those who are already weak; and Olympia, when it attacked her, was as feverish and weak as her worst foe could desire. The consequence was — of what use is it protracting the story or going into minute details — the consequence was, that the malady was victorious; and Death, to the long list of his illustrious and lovely victims, has now added

the heiress and last descendant of the once famous house of G——i!

“I could tell you how she faded, and faded away; how first she lost her strength, and then her beauty; how she travelled from place to place; how she consulted infallible physicians, and tried one after the other, ‘amusement,’ ‘occupation,’ ‘change,’ and the fifty things which are recommended in hopeless cases; and how at last she retired to the house of a friend near Verona, and there died uncomplaining. But I do not desire to make my story more pathetic than it is. I state little more than what the kind-hearted monk, who attended her in her last moments, detailed to me this morning. Poor old fellow! he wiped his eyes so often with the sleeve of his rough dress, that I was enticed into bearing him company, and cried also.”


‘Was he that solemn voice,’ inquired I, ‘which rose above the rest in the requiem?’

‘Yes, truly,’ replied our friend; ‘that was he. He sang, if you remember, those deep tones which thrilled you, you said, at the conclusion of the dirge —

‘But we — *but we*

Are alone with the dead on the lonely sea!’

‘I remember,’ said I, ‘both the voice and the words. They were both well entitled to make an impression. And now, Sir,’ added I, ‘I must thank you for your story, although you have forgotten the two persons who stood beside us when the funeral procession passed. You promised to give some account of them, did you not?’



‘True,’ answered our friend; ‘I had forgotten. The female was the wife of the musician, her companion; and her companion was — Camillo cini!’

Such was the lady’s account of her ‘Day in Venice,’ and such the narrative related to her.

‘It is all I remember,’ said she, in conclusion; ‘much you will say, yet it was sufficient to interest at the time, although there are not materials enough to constitute a story.’

1828.

THE STAUNTONS.

It was nearly midnight when a person, whom, for various reasons, we choose to call Sir Everard Staunton, descended from the drawing-room of his country mansion to his library, accompanied by a young man, who was his relation. Until that day, Edward Staunton (for that was the young man's name), had never seen his titled cousin; and he now came down to 'the Priory' by virtue of a pressing invitation from its owner, to whom he had applied respecting some arrears of an annuity or legacy that had been payable to his father out of the family estates, and which now, in truth, constituted nearly the whole of his little fortune.

They took their way down the broad marble stairs, and along carpeted passages; their footsteps falling so softly as scarcely to waken an echo. Sir Everard led the way, and the young man followed, but neither uttered a word. The first was apparently full of serious meditation, while the latter occupied himself partly with speculating on the strange character of his great cousin, and partly with listening to the blustering of a wild, hollow, moaning November wind, which

was straining the branches of some old pine-trees, and driving occasionally a few heavy drops of rain against the windows of the house.

It was a situation, not for fear, but for that vague sort of awe which comes over us when we are surrounded by darkness and silence. And, indeed, the character of Sir Everard Staunton himself, was well calculated to deepen such an impression. He was, or was reputed to be, of a stern, unsocial habit; mixing little with the business which the country gentlemen were called upon to perform as magistrates or landlords in the county, and never joining in their amusements. At the age of twenty, he became the undisputed master of twenty thousand pounds a year. But his temperament was naturally proud and moody; and this, which solitude increased, was at least greatly augmented by the death of a lady to whom he was contracted in marriage. From that day, Sir Everard Staunton became an altered man.

In his youth (and he was now scarcely more than forty years of age), he had been remarkable for personal beauty. There were individuals, even ladies, to attest this, who knew him before jaundice and sleepless nights had tinged his face with an unhealthy color. *Now*, his skin was sallow: sickness and sorrow, bile and opium, and marasma, seclusion, and the sadness that springs from many lonely years, had attenuated his figure, and stolen the lustre from his once black and searching eyes. Still, however, the intellect stamped upon his forehead, which rose up, broad and upright, from his brows, and was lost in a cloud of raven hair, commanded attention; and his dark, long,

and finely-formed features—even the smile which sarcasm brought to his mouth—his stern look, and his haughty bearing, produced alternately admiration and respect. With another name, one might have caught oneself now and then detecting among his features the patrician aspect of Surrey, or the chivalrous bearing of Sir Philip Sidney; and at times, even a more stirring and lofty character, such as might have belonged to a descendant of the houses of Plantaganet or Tudor.

But we have no space to waste upon mere description. The reader will, therefore, imagine (while we have been introducing him thus personally, as it were, to Sir Everard Staunton), that both he and his young relative had taken their station in the two arm-chairs that were placed by the library fire. The room was large and gloomy, notwithstanding the bright blaze which issued from the grate, and a couple of large lamps, which diffused a mild but melancholy light throughout the room. The wainscoat, where it was visible, appeared to be of black oak, deeply carved; although nearly the whole of the walls were covered with books of all sorts, in all languages, which the taste of one ancestor and the pride or industry of others had collected during a long succession of Stauntons.

Sir Everard put his hand upon the bell-rope. ‘You may go to bed, Darford,’ said he to his servant, who answered his summons. ‘Yet, observe! I have something to do to-night, a matter of moment, with which this gentleman, Mr. Edward Staunton, is altogether unacquainted. You will remember this?’

‘I will, Sir Everard,’ replied the man; saying which he bowed and retired.

During this brief dialogue, Edward had stood up to contemplate a portrait that was suspended over the fireplace. As far as could be judged by that light, it represented a dark, middle-aged man, with a very noble and expressive countenance.

‘It is Sir Edward Staunton, my father,’ replied Sir Everard, bringing forward one of the lamps in order to render the painting more distinct. ‘It is my father. How do you like his look? He was an excellent, learned, noble-minded man.’

‘The countenance is *very* striking,’ replied Edward; ‘but it wears a sad expression, to my thinking. Was he unhappy, Sir?’

‘He ought *not* to have been so,’ answered the other, smiling grimly; ‘so at least the world would tell you: for he had twenty-five thousand pounds a year, and both his heart and his body were free from blemish.’

‘And yet—’ Edward was proceeding, when the other took up his words.

‘And *yet*!’ echoed he; ‘he was not a jovial, champagne drinking fellow. He scarcely “enjoyed” himself, as the phrase goes, seldom smiled, and was never merry. He had courage, generosity, intellect, and fifty other qualities which might be mentioned, were it worth while to enumerate them; and *yet*, he walked through life—a melancholy man. I do not know how it is,’ continued Sir Everard, with compressed lips, and speaking at intervals, ‘but we Stauntons seem to have foresworn merriment, even before we could stammer out a jest. We are ourselves—a jest.

Here am I—I, scarcely any one to accuse, nothing of which I may complain, nothing to dread, nothing to wish for. And *yet*, I have seen a beggar who could laugh more heartily, and a cripple with more buoyancy in his gait.'

'You should have some pursuit, Sir Everard,' observed his companion, 'some —'

'Cousin!' interrupted the other, almost fiercely, 'I have tried everything! Like those who are cursed with sterility, there is nothing that I have not done — no path that I have not traversed — no aid that I have not sought — and all in vain! *My* way of life is barren — barren! Is it not strange, is it not *hard*, that we all, from sire to son, have come into this cold-hearted world, and grown upwards, with this cloud upon our mind, which neither travel, nor thought, nor toil, can dissipate? It seems as though that terrible line of Dante, which was graven over Hell-gate —

. "*All Hope abandon, ye who enter here!*"

hung for ever over *us*; following us from age to age, and from land to land. It has spread its influence over the proudest of our name. We are a care-worn, hopeless, melancholy race, filled with dark doubts, and oppressed by strange imaginations. So it has been with my fathers, and so it must be with me, until I take my turn to go past the beech-wood, which you saw this morning, to rest in our small mansion beyond — the mausoleum of all the Stauntons!'

'This is wild; 'tis —' Edward hesitated.

'Out with the word, cousin,' said Sir Everard — 'madness! That is what you would say. But you

are mistaken. We are free from *that* unhappy taint. We are of a gloomy temperament only, and — we cannot help it.'

'Man may control his blood, Sir Everard,' said his young companion, 'and may do with himself almost whatever he desires.'

'"*Man*," cousin!' responded Sir Everard. 'Tush, tush! when you have toiled through three-and-forty years, you will find that man is no better than a weed. Half, at least, of what he shows depends upon the soil he grows in. This cloudy country, now, does not agree with *my* temperament; and hence I always droop. 'Nevertheless,' added he somewhat sadly, 'one loves one's native land with a sort of natural superstition, which it is not easy to get rid of. So, I shall take my chance even where I am. I shall live as long as — is convenient; and then I shall set off for the Moon.'

'I hope you will live long, my dear Sir Everard, — long and happily,' said Edward Staunton, with a sincere emphasis, — 'with silver hairs upon your head, and children flourishing about you.'

The kindness which Sir Everard had shown him during the day, and his unexpected generosity touching some pecuniary question, had had its effect on the young man. He spoke from his heart, and, as is then always the case, produced a sudden and evident effect upon his proud relative. Yet Sir Everard had been duped repeatedly in his time, had found relatives who were not friends, and seen friend after friend fail him; and he therefore scanned with a jealous eye, the open, *ingenuous* countenance before him. There was nothing

concealed in it : all was fair, open, blushing and burning with the strong feeling which his cousin's depondency had excited. Sir Everard saw this, and spoke at last with a gloomy but friendly smile, —

‘ You almost deserve that I should take you at your word, my foolish cousin. Do you know, that by the will of that same Sir Edward, who looks upon you from the panel there, you are entitled to large estates, in case I die childless or without a will ? ’

‘ I have heard something of this, Sir, yet imperfectly,’ replied Edward; ‘ it never, however, dwelt for an instant on my memory. Besides, Sir Everard Staunton will not do such an act of injustice, as to disinherit both his sister and his sister’s son.’

‘ What ! ’ — said Sir Everard, — ‘ do you mean Julia Fortescue ? and Julia’s child ? Sir, added he sternly, ‘ she deceived her father first, and then she betrayed me. And her son — oh ! he inherits his mother’s nature ; save that to the cunning of the fox, he has added the viper’s venom. No more of them. By my father’s soul, I swear to you, I will rather endow a hospital, or scatter my possessions to the winds, than waste them on those who are base and ungrateful. But — once more,’ added he, resuming his quiet manner, ‘ let us speak no more of this. Tell me rather of yourself. What are *you* doing, my young cousin ? and what do you intend to do ? ’

‘ I — I scarcely know,’ replied Edward ; ‘ the death of my father has thrown me suddenly on my own resources. Yet, I think he wished me to study law.’

‘ And your wish ? ’ inquired Sir Everard.

‘ My *wishes* lead me to the army,’ was the reply.

‘Tis a bad school,’ said the other, ‘in which a scarlet jacket and a clanking sword often stand a man in the stead of virtue, knowledge, modesty, wit, and all else that makes life tolerable to others, or becoming in itself. Nevertheless there is one good about it; you have your chance of being made immortal by the first bayonet or bullet that comes athwart you; and then adieu to hope, to anxiety, and fear, and all the ills, as our friend Shakspeare has it, “which flesh is heir to.”’

‘And have *you* felt so much of hope, or anxiety?’ Edward ventured to inquire.

‘Yes, — once;’ answered Sir Everard; “once I confess: and now as we have arrived at this point, I will condemn myself to relate something of my history to you. You are a Staunton, you know, and are bound to stand up for the honor of the family. So, when I am safe in my six-feet home, and turned to dust and ashes, I leave you to fight as many battles as need may be, for the purity of my reputation. I have a touch of earth about me, you see, notwithstanding my philosophy.’

‘I wish from my heart, that I could say or do anything to serve you, Sir Everard,’ said Edward Staunton.

‘I am past service, my good boy,’ said the other sadly: ‘but I have a something to do which shall be prefaced by my confession. Look at me! Why do you think I select *you*, of whom I know so little, for the confidant of my private history? You cannot guess! Well, I will help you. Did you not, some

three months since, 'tis scarcely more, rescue a man who was beset by robbers ?'

'Yes, said Edward, 'I was luckily of use to a stranger, one night, in London. He was coming from a house near St. James's Square ——'

'He was coming from the gaming-table, loaded with money,' interrupted the other : 'he had won, that night, five thousand guineas from sharpers, and they wished for another transfer of their gold. To effect this, they bade him stand and deliver ; and one of them struck him with his knife across the temple — just here,' added he, and he thrust aside a cloud of dark hair, and showed a huge cicatrice in evidence of his assertion ; 'in a word,' said Sir Everard Staunton, 'I was the man !'

'How ! you ?' said Edward, in astonishment.

'Even so,' replied Sir Everard ; 'I promised, if you remember, that night, when I inquired your name, that you should hear further of me, and you have heard somewhat already. Now give me your attention. I am about to speak of a subject which I shall have no opportunity to touch on again. I am about to confess to you my weakness — my errors — in a word, to tell you briefly the story of my life. Listen.

'I was born to great fortunes, and a noble name. I was an only child. My father was proud of me ; my mother doated on me. *Why* this should be, I could never learn ; certainly not for any qualities of my heart or head. It had its origin, I suppose, simply in that mysterious charm which links the parent to the child, in spite of all human accidents, — in spite of

poverty, and sickness, and crime in the father, and of all kinds of faults and follies in the son.

‘ Well, my mother, this kind mother, died. She was an accomplished lady — almost faultless ; one that in other times might have stood as a pattern amongst women — like a Portia among wives — amongst matrons, like a mother of the Gracchi. But she died ; and her husband, naturally sad, fell into irrecoverable gloom. In the mean time I sprung up into manhood. My father and I were the best friends in the world. We read together, shot, hunted, wandered about together. We were brothers in intimacy ; without his losing the affection of a father, or I the respect of a child. He shared with me his thoughts, his inmost secrets, his fortune, to the utmost farthing ; and I did what I could to deserve them. I partook of his solitude ; I tried with all my strength to dissipate his sadness. But all would not do. He left me, as my mother had left me before ; and I became the wealthy Sir Everard Staunton.

‘ It was about this time, that, not content with other ills, I must needs love. I loved — God ! ’ exclaimed he, with uncontrollable emotion ; ‘ how much, how deeply, how truly ! I loved an angel. I cannot call *her* a woman, who had not one of woman’s thousand faults. From my soul I believe she was as pure in thought, as lovely in her life, as the immaculate angels are. I will not talk of her beauty, yet she was surpassingly beautiful ; I cannot analyze her person, and spread out her perfections before you, one by one, in petty Epicurean detail. She filled my whole heart. She possessed every thought, every fancy, for a time ;

and then, she also died, and left me to despair for ever! Since she fled away, — the dove who brought peace to my lonely life, — I have never known joy or comfort. Yet I survived her, — as the base body *will* live on, when the mind grows dark and perishes; for what purpose, except to sin and suffer, I know not. It is time,' added he, gloomily, 'that this should end.'

He now paused for a minute, and seemed contending with some internal passion, which cost him a struggle to vanquish. The muscles of his mouth were strongly agitated, and there was an evident tremor in his voice, a hesitation in his speech, as he proceeded.

'I have told you, how first one, and another, and then another, was swept from the face of the world, in order that I might go down to my grave alone. Would that I had gone earlier! But it was not to be. I was to *live* as well as die alone, and I was to break out once from my solitude and commit crimes, that to natural sadness have added undying remorse.

'I had one friend, who was, when I was a youth, like a brother to me. He was a German nobleman, and was called the Count Hardensteine. He had come to England to complete his education, and he had then, after some travel, returned home, and married a Spanish lady. This woman, the Countess Maria, was a Phryne — a Circe — a Calypso — or what you will. She had the talent of a man with the softness of her sex, and all the attractions of the most dazzling beauty. There was lightning in her eyes, music on her tongue, grace and a voluptuous air in every motion, and a devil in her heart. I cannot tell you how she tampered with me, nor how or wherefore I yielded to her pas-

sion. Observe, I seek to extenuate nothing. I played the part of a villain. I forgot, in one moment, years and acts of friendship, and returned the caresses of a wanton, whom fifty lovers had wearied of before. How my friend could have lived for years thus blindly, in the wiles of an unprincipled woman, is still a mystery. Yet, I believe that he *was* ignorant of her iniquities, until the eyes of a jealous rival turned his observation upon me.

‘But why do I dwell upon all this? I sinned against my brother, and stood up to expose myself before his wrath, with a hearty wish that he might not aim in vain. We met, and, after his bullet had sung past my head, I fired my weapon in the air, and walked towards him to explain, and entreat his pardon. He struck me down, — *me*, who had thought never to endure such ignominy from the hand of a created being. He struck me, spurned me on the ground, showered upon me opprobrious names, horrible maledictions, and then dared me to meet him upon that fresh quarrel. I was mad. I stood again, and again received his fire, which harmed me not. Then it was that I made a movement towards him, without discharging my pistol; he mistook me, and seizing another weapon was leveling it once more against me, when the impulse — I know not what — the love of self, that in such cases reasons not, and admits of no deliberation, spurred my arm. I fired, and my friend lay, in a moment, dead at my feet! He was shot right through the heart. He did not utter a single cry, so suddenly did he perish; but lay on the bloody ground before me paler than *stone*, with his eyes half open, *looking* reproaches

that I deserved, and have never for one instant forgotten.

‘Those ghastly, dying eyes haunt me *still*, at morn, and noon, and midnight ; in my dreams and rambles ; and the consciousness of crime has placed a load upon my life, that, come what will, I must now perforce shake off.’

Edward was about to remonstrate.

‘Speak not,’ said Sir Everard, hurriedly. ‘I have thought, and have determined. Some day or other I shall die ; whether from sickness, or remorse, or fear—no, not fear ; whether from gradual decay or sudden murder, I know not ; but let us stop. I can talk no more at present. I cannot now detail the hundred minor ills that beset me in every stage of my progress. I *could* tell how, from this calamity that I have recounted, a tale grew up, (my sister—ha, ha,—knows its origin,) —grew up, that I had assassinated the husband as I had seduced the wife ; how I was shunned by my friends, acquaintances, who would not take the trouble to investigate my story ; how I flew to gaming and became the prey of sharpers ; and how I grew clear-sighted in that honest profession ; and at last could overcome, by mere skill, the most ingenious frauds. But my narrative is finished ; and I now wish to be alone. Go, therefore, into the adjoining room, for awhile, and leave me. I have some papers to prepare which I must write alone. It is my wish, my desire, that, when I die, you will read and not neglect them. Promise me this !’

‘I promise,’ replied Edward, ‘but —’

‘Fear not,’ said the other. ‘Fear not, ’tis well, and

I thank you.' He took the young man's hand in *his* own, and grasped it cordially. 'Now leave me,' said he, 'without more ado. You shall hear when I require your presence.'

Edward left the room in obedience to his friend's request, and proceeded into an adjoining apartment, where he found a small lamp burning (it was the closet adjoining Sir Everard's bed-room); and there, excited and wearied with the interview that we have endeavored to relate, he sat down to rest his nerves, amidst the absolute stillness that prevailed.

There is nothing on earth more impressive than this dark and unbroken night silence. There is, indeed, something unutterably solemn in the tones wherein the sea and mountains sometimes deign to speak. Even the wind, which blows as it listeth, and the river which wanders at its will, have tongues and whispers which are unaccountably awful to those who brood over their words. Yet we associate with these children of nature, perhaps, a feeling which belongs solely to ourselves, and mark in their several movements the reflection only of our own wonder and delight. Who ever listened to the brook bubbling along the spring meadows, without attributing to it the cheerfulness which it infused into his mind? Yet the torrent of Winter bounds onward with as much glee as the river of Spring. And who ever hearkened to the sound of the earthquake or the disturbed ocean, without investing it with qualities bred only in his own sensations, and attributing to it words and menaces written only on the page of his own disturbed heart? To all these things, tender or fearful as they may be, we affix the

idea of *life*, of strength, or youth, gladness or power. But for Silence, the solemn starry SILENCE, who wraps all the world at once as with a pall, and who, though she speaks not and moves not, makes her awful way into the innermost recesses of the human heart, there is no similitude, no metaphor that links her to our being; or, if there be one, it is only that one which talks to us of a dim 'hereafter'—that fear, which stands like a ghostly dream before our fancy, the shadowy and immeasurable phantom of — *Death!*

It was somewhat thus that the current of Edward Staunton's thoughts ran, as he sate looking at the flickering of the little lamp before him, when suddenly, without any previous noise or note of preparation, a thundering explosion was heard in the adjoining room. It was as though several cases of fire-arms had been discharged at once. Edward started up, and in an instant—as soon, at least, as he could recover his recollection—tore open the library door, and beheld Sir Everard Staunton in his chair utterly dead! His neck was bent, his head lying useless on his shoulder, while from his broad fine temples, through which the blue veins once branched and wandered, came spouting out a stream of blood and gore. A bullet had penetrated his brain.

What young Staunton did, how he summoned the servants, or whether they were roused by the noise that had occurred, we are not able to detail. Nor is it of any importance. It appeared, however, that the unfortunate man had written several letters, one of which was addressed to his servant Darford, and another to Edward Staunton, to '*Sir Edward Staun-*

ton.' The youth was shocked at this first intimation of his title, and with difficulty deciphered his cousin's writing. It ran, however, thus : —

' COUSIN, — I leave you a large fortune and a noble name. Take care of both, and do — what *I* could never do — enjoy them !

' As far as I may, I confirm to you the estates which my father bequeathed to you in case I should perish childless. While you are reading these my last words, *this* will already have happened. I leave no child, not even a friend, save yourself, behind me. And this is well, for I would cause regret to no one.

' Farewell, Sir Edward Staunton. If ever you think of the last who owned that ancient name, pity him, pray for him. He wished to live on and endure, but he *could not* do this. There was nothing for him but madness or the grave, and the last he hoped would be at least a shelter. Pray for him that it may be so ! Pray from your heart ! Farewell ! E. S.'

Edward fell on his knees involuntarily as he read this last record of Sir Everard Staunton. He prayed fervently and 'from his heart,' that pardon might be awarded to the mistaken man — turned round and saw that the servant (Darford) was weeping over the last testimony of his master's kindness, and himself burst into a passion of tears.

Such is the account given by the late steward of the — family, of the manner in which the estates passed into the hands of their possessor, in the year 1757. He added, that the gentleman who is above designated as

Edward Staunton, took possession of the property without opposition, and enjoyed it between thirty and forty years, at the expiration of which time he died. During his life he allowed a substantial annuity to the sister of Sir Everard, and presented her son with a considerable sum of money, but he would hold no personal intercourse with either. It was never known what had induced Sir Everard Staunton to commit suicide so much more suddenly than he seemed originally to have contemplated. Probably, however, it was from some impulse of despair which could not bear suspense, or even its own weight any longer. That he actually did what we have detailed is an undoubted fact, and as all parties have died long since, there can be no impropriety in now making the story public.

1828.

A CHAPTER ON PORTRAITS.

Of all the Souvenirs, and Keepsakes, and Bijoux — of all the Christmas-boxes, Amulets, and Gems, Anniversaries, and Forget-me-nots, (flowers of cold weather) — of all the presents with which we should choose to commemorate a birthday, or a festival, or to offer to one whom we regard, as an indication of good-will or friendship, we think we should select a portrait; a portrait, perhaps our own. It should not be cast in gingerbread, which would be too provocative; nor in brass, which would be out of character; nor in paper, for we are already but too inflammable; neither should we desire to ride on boys' shoulders, triumphant in pipe-clay, smeared over with blue and scarlet, immortal as plaister could make us, amongst Dukes of Wellington, and Napoleons, amongst dumb Paul Prys, and silent parrots. An humbler lot be ours. We should scarcely choose to look out from a snuff-box, blazing with brilliants, for it would be too imperial, and we might, for the first time, forget ourselves.

We have said that it should, perhaps, be a portrait of ourself (selves); but we recall our words. We are inclined to abandon that agreeable notion. At all

events, it should not *always* represent our own features, to the exclusion of philosophers and heroes. We would not invariably usurp the place of Shakspeare and Bacon. We do not love ourselves so immeasurably. Some face, however, which we love or respect, it should ever be; in preference even to a hamper of Johannisberg or a case of Lafitte, or a haunch of the bravest buck that ever nipped the grass of a Scottish moor.

There is something delightful in the intercourse which we hold with another's likeness. It is himself, only once removed; he is visible, not tangible: we have his moiety. In a picture of history, there is often indeed more to admire than on the mere face of one individual, man or woman. There is more room for the skill of the artist; it is better adapted to exemplify a moral. But the *sentiment* that chains us to the other, is wanting; we are not *familiar* with it. One is a brave matter, a splendid thing; the other is a *person*, and becomes our friend. We would never worship, as some do, the complicated strife of arms, and legs, and shoulders; or think only of the way in which each is subdued by the painter, and made, by the wonders of light and shade, to represent a great event. We would rather look upon the eyes of some Italian 'Dama,' whom Titian or Giorgione painted long ago without a name, and catalogued only as 'Portrait of a lady;' or face one of Titian's piercing heads, (a noble of Venice or Rome,) than sit down before the most elaborate composition of history, or see brought out in dazzling array before us, all the battles of Alexander, or all the triumphs or processions of the Cæsars.

We were exceedingly struck by the delicacy of two or three friends, who conspired lately to give an old acquaintance pleasure on his return from a distant part of India. His wife had been obliged to come to England for her health, and his friends secretly caused her portrait to be painted, in order that on his return to Madras or Bengal he might find the *likeness* at least of her who was dearest to him in the world. It is thus that the form and features of the child are made known to its pining parents afar off. It is thus that the places which we loved to look upon, are redeemed from the grave, and sent to us, across deserts, and woods, and mountains, or over a thousand leagues of water. This is the greatest boast of art, as well as the most delightful victory. It annihilates space, if not time, and makes the absent happy.

An historical scene is a fiction merely. Be it ever so true to nature, it is still the fiction of *the painter*. But a portrait is truth itself. No imagination can compete with it; it is either the very thing we desire, or nothing; all depends on its truth. Even in a portrait, to use the term, of inanimate nature, what assemblage of cataracts, and hills and forests; what glories of sunset or meridian may compete with the little landscape, which restores to us the scene of our own quiet home, which brings before us our childhood, the tree under which we have played, the river beside which we have slept or sported? Art, which never addresses itself, strictly speaking, to our reason, is valuable only in proportion as it operates upon our feelings; these are seldom (and then but little) excited by the mere invention of a painter; we rather sympa-

thize with *his* difficulties; we congratulate him upon *his* success; we say, 'How admirably has he grouped those figures! How finely are the light and shade distributed! what grand expression! what dramatic effect!' We look upon the artist as a hero; he has done so much — for his own fame. But he who gives us the very smile which won or warms our hearts, the frank or venerable aspect of our friend or father, the dawning beauty of our child, or shows us the tender eyes with which the wife or mother looks love upon us from a distant region, *he* seems to have thought of *us* rather than of his own renown, and becomes at once our benefactor and our friend.

It is very pleasant, to our thinking, to traverse some country mansion, where the portraits of its former owners hang up side by side with each other; frail records, it is true, of vanity and glory! We love to trace them upwards into absolute barbarism; to mailed, bearded, ferocious warriors, powerful, and — forgotten. And among them, it is hard if we cannot detect *one* whom learning or science has honored — a poet, a monk, or a philosopher; perhaps one even, whom Love has made immortal. We once saw such a one. There he was, with nobility on his forehead, and sadness in his eye, — the humbled inheritor of a proud name, the impoverished master of thousands! Can we help pitying such a sufferer? We see him, and pass on — we see another — and another — and another: but he still remains fixed in our memory; '*hæret lateri lethalis arundo*;' and we turn back after viewing all the rest, once more to sympathize with him alone. We say, 'Rich one! are you there

still? — *still* pale, and dumb, and melancholy? Had the foul fiend so seized upon you, that not even the flattering painter could take the sorrow from your eye — the sting that had ran piercing through your heart? 'Faith, you are fallen indeed.

Let not the reader suppose, from what we have said, that we are wanting in a due respect for the illustrious painters who have conferred honor upon art; we love or admire them all. We can pore over a book of prints, even, and forget ourselves among the old masters of the Italian school of painting. We can begin with Giotto, and go on untired, to the last of the school of the Carracci. There is great fervor, and (so to speak) devotion of spirit in some of Giotto's works. Did the reader ever see his two saintly heads, in the possession of Mr. Rogers, the poet? There is great skill and some grandeur in Massaccio, and infinite beauty in Perugino. Then, there are the quaint loveliness of Leonardo da Vinci, — the frowning power of Michael Angelo, — the splendors of Giorgione and Titian, — the suavity of Correggio, — and the life, and spirit, and beauty, — the grace, and intelligence, and unequalled propriety of Raffaello! There too are Guido's pale heads, and Domenichino's divine expressions! — the stern realities of Annibal, — the touching looks of Fra Bartolomeo, — the halcyon skies of Claude, — and the stormy landscapes of Salvator Rosa! In a word, all that beauty and power, or the spirit of religion and love have dictated, — all that great Nature herself has taught, are therein assembled, to delight whomsoever has the taste to value them. The most radiant visions open themselves upon us; — the gran-

deur of the old world — the fantastic eloquence of the new — the creation of Adam — the visage of Cæsar — Cleopatra and her asp — Roman temples, Egyptian pyramids, — angels, and hierarchs, and prophets — warriors of all times — women, lovelier and more amiable than the rainbow, — all are brought back before us by a power greater than that of Prospero's wand. And can we refuse our homage? No; we gaze, and acknowledge that, even in its degradation and decline, Italy had still some spirits able to perpetuate her glory, and, in some degree, even to elevate her name!

The great painters to whom we have adverted, for the purpose of recording our respect for art in general, were painters of history or landscape. But they could at times abandon their professed employment, and sketch the likeness of their mistress, or of their friend, or of some excelling beauty of their age and nation; such as artists, above all others, delight to honor. The Transfiguration was done by Raffaele for the sake of eternal renown (which it has won), but the Fornarina was a work of love; and the artist's own portrait (more than once painted by himself, and given to his friend or patron), is well worthy the double commendation that men have conspired to bestow upon it. It is a masterly deed, twice honored, for its own merit, and for the principle of gratitude in which it had its origin.

Few of the great Roman artist's pictures have been more admired than his portraits of Leo, and Julius the Second. There is so much of integrity in the design, so much truth in the detail, that no one who gazes can

for a moment doubt but that they are the true representations of those famous men. Raffaello's life was employed on works of imagination, such as no one else has equalled; but he could descend from the 'dignity of history,' as it is called, and submit to transcribe a faithful lesson of nature, like one of a less gifted intellect.

We can scarcely imagine, indeed, a thing much more pleasant to an artist, than to be brought face to face with some famous person, and permitted to examine and scrutinize his features, with that careful and intense curiosity that seems necessary to perfecting a likeness. It must have been to Raffaello at once a relaxation from his ordinary study, and a circumstance interesting in itself, thus to look into faces so full of meaning as those of Julius and Leo, and to say, 'That look, that glance which seems so transient, will I fix for ever. Thus shall it be seen, with that exact expression (although it lasted but for an instant), five hundred years after he shall be dust and ashes!'

Shall we go on? No. All, or most of what we had to say, is said; and now — it is time to stop.

THE PRISON-BREAKER.

It was a custom, some years ago, with a few young men, to meet together once a week at each other's houses, and to communicate their ideas in writing. These productions were always read and left at the house of the entertainer, who returned, with a cold supper, a small portion of the good that he received in the shape of imagination and wit. Every person, as I have said, communicated his ideas, but no one was bound to any particular subject. Each one was to do his best. He who could not write prose was allowed to take refuge in rhyme. He who could not be entertaining was permitted to be learned. 'We can sleep, at all events,' said one of the body, when a person of indifferent merit was proposed. In a word, one or two members of unknown talent were admitted into our party (which was to consist of a dozen), and among the rest an old gentleman in spectacles, of a somewhat saturnine aspect, from whom we expected to receive at least an Essay on Optics, but who, to our infinite surprise, presented us with the following anecdote. (The circumstance of my being host of the

evening will account for my possession of the manuscript.)

It was thus our sexagenarian began : —

‘I am an old man, almost sixty. Some of my vivacity is perhaps gone ; certainly all my sentimentality has vanished. My “sallad days” are over. Instead of manufacturing bad rhymes and groaning at the moon — instead of sighing, after a villainous fashion, at every mantua-maker I meet — I set down my thoughts in level prose ; I sun myself leisurely at mid-day, and I care no more for a milliner than I do for a mouse-trap. All this philosophy I have learned in the great school of old age, where one gets wisdom in return for giving up all one’s enjoyments. Yet these matters may be drawbacks with some persons, — and if so I am willing to be silent. If, however, there be any one who shall still desire “a touch of my quality,” let him proceed with the following narrative. It is, I assure him, every tittle of it *true* : —

‘About five or six-and-twenty years ago I went to reside at Charwood, a little village in the south-west part of England. Charwood is a pretty spot — a green, out-o’-the-way place, with a semicircular wood crowning the high land above it, and a brisk, glittering trout stream running away at its foot. The reader must understand that I was *not* a recluse. I did not shut myself up, like the Hermit of Tong, and let my beard grow for a recompense of half a crown per week. I did not even retreat to this seclusion from any lofty misanthropy. I liked the world well enough — I had no cause for dislike. My play had not been damned, my wife had not run away, I had not been kicked or

l at Newmarket or Brookes's. In short, I was comfortable, and — a bachelor.

nd now to begin with my story. It is to be d that I commence under some disadvantages. heroine is the last in the world that a novelist l have selected. She had scarcely any of the ary qualities which allure from the eyes of ladies' s and sempstresses such rivers of tears. She neither romantic nor mysterious, nor fond of ng ; she had no confidante, and was not devoured "secret sorrow." I scarcely know how, with defects, I can contrive to infuse any portion of st into her narrative. But I have undertaken her history, and must do the best I can. Little Sophy mere (for that was her name) was the daughter small landed proprietor in Charwood. She was ily child — the offspring of a selfish, wilful father, patient, housewife-like little woman, who, through y years of her ill-assorted union, endured more les than were ever borne by any one, except who have suffered under that most damnable of n vices — domestic tyranny. Sophy had some- of her father's wilfulness, and all her mother's ess of heart. She was, moreover, sufficiently d by both ; just enough to save her from the ice of being a common heroine. She had her hare of faults, and a few virtues. These things up together in Charwood like weeds and flowers, gh, in the illuminated Leadenhall MSS. they are carefully apart, lest human folly should be cked too closely, and nature be pronounced a

‘ Our little girl was lively, good-hearted, headstrong, passionate ; as wild as a colt, and as brave as a lion. In respect of her person, she was not perfectly beautiful ; on the contrary, she was almost as brown as a gipsy, had irregular features, dark, piercing eyes, and lips like a Moresco. These defects were, it is true, redeemed by certain beauties ; for with piercing eyes (whose intense expression amounted almost to the painful,) a sweet smile, unblemished teeth, and a figure that would have graced a Dryad, she could not have been said to be utterly without beauty. Such as she was, the reader (the “*courteous* reader”) will, I make no doubt, regard her with interest — if he can.

‘ When Sophy was about sixteen years of age she became an orphan. Both her parents died in the same week — the one through some fit (of apoplexy or paralysis,) caused by violent passion ; the other by incessant watching, by exposure and agitation, each operating upon a constitution that had been previously undermined by ill-treatment and disease. They died ; and Sophy, to whose mind death had never occurred before, found herself, for the first time in her life, utterly alone.

‘ It is at such times that the mind gives way or matures itself. The weak one despairs and falls ; but that which is strong collects its strength, and prepares to struggle with adversity, and to run a race with Fortune. Our heroine was of the stronger order ; but she had loved her mother tenderly, although the gaiety of her temperament had somewhat abated the show of those filial attentions which quieter children love

to exhibit. Now, however, that both parents were gone, her grief became for a time uncontrollable. For a time, I say ; because her spirit, naturally firm and aspiring, rose up from the sickliness of useless sorrow, and put on once more a healthful aspect. In her endeavors to regain serenity she was assisted by the good counsel of a friend. This friend was a female, a foreigner, a native of Padua, "learned Padua," and under her auspices the little Sophy, who had originally begun with her a course of French and Italian, now took lessons in a more useful science — namely, that of practical philosophy. Madame de Mercet at first wept with her pupil, afterwards soothed her, and finally reasoned her into tranquillity. I believe, indeed, that the relation of her own little history had more effect in quieting the mind of the mourner than any argument ; for she thus learned all that the fair foreigner had suffered, and her own sorrows shrank in importance.

‘Madame de Mercet was a dutiful daughter, a happy wife, and a fond mother, when she was suddenly made an orphan and a motherless widow by the Liberators of St. Antoine, at the time that they sacrificed science, and art, and knowledge of all sorts, to the unreasonable *Goddess of Reason*. The mother of Madame de Mercet died in a revolutionary prison, and she herself, and her husband, were suspected of incivism, and invited to attend at the Place de Grève. They went, accompanied by great honors — a shining array of sabres and sans-culottes — and must have both perished amidst the execrations of regenerated France, but for one trifling circumstance. M. de Mercet had luckily been of ser-

vice once to Citoyen La Lanterne (formerly *un cordonnier*), and the citizen had committed great benefits on the Republic. At his intercession, a reprieve was sent when the De Mercets were at the scaffold. They were declared innocent more suddenly than they had been pronounced guilty ; they were hailed and wept over ; and Madame de Mercet after having received the kiss of fraternity about eleven hundred times, after hearing her name screamed out and lauded till the tympanum of her ear was almost broken, was, with her husband escorted back to their Hotel with the same honors that surrounded them in their progress. Indeed, the only difference between the going and return was, that Monsieur de Mercet left his head to grace the boards of the scaffold, the reprieve having come, for *him*, just three minutes too late. After this, Madame took an unaccountable aversion to the good city of Paris, and her child dying soon after, (from a mixture of terror and distress,) she packed up her jewels secretly, obtained by some interest a passport to Frankfort, and thence proceeded to England, where she finally settled at the village of Charwood, and became the tutoress of the little Sophy ; to whom it is now time to return.

‘ Six days after the death of her parents, Sophy Ellesmere (now sixteen years of age) heard the will of her father read, and found herself placed under the guardianship of Mr. Dacre, a friend and occasional visitor of her father, but with whom she had till then had but little intercourse. Mr. Dacre was the husband of a lady whose good or bad qualities need not delay us, inasmuch as she has nothing to do with the present narrative ; but he was also the father of Harry Dacre, who

was a person of more importance to our story. Harry Dacre it was who fell in love with our heroine.

‘ We do not mean to wax tedious in detailing the loves of young Dacre and Sophy Ellesmere. We shall cut the matter short, by saying simply that they fell over head-and-ears in love according to the most approved fashion. They sighed, and whispered, and languished, and looked unutterable things. The young man swore that he could not live without her ; she vowed on her part to be eternally his ; and, indeed, the girl had a heart that was worth the winning — open, honest, and constant. The youth was sincere enough in his professions, for he was furiously in love ; but his heart owned more attractions than towards the one true magnet. It was allured by a cockade and a scarlet jacket so effectually, indeed, that at the age of twenty, his father (persuaded that his son would turn out a hero) purchased a cornetcy for him, in order that he might bring down fame upon himself and family.

‘ Cornet Dacre very speedily showed himself to be an “ altered man.” With a sword by his side, and I know not how many yards of gold lace upon his person, he appeared to have forgotten all the whippings of his school-days, and walked as though he had won the victories both of Blenheim and Ramilies. Once, he was as “ modest as morning ” towards strangers, although a Hector with his inferiors ; *now*, he was “ whiskered like a pard ; ” spurred like a fighting-cock ; “ full of sound and fury,” and, to justify the complete quotation, he also, it must be owned, signified “ nothing ! ”

‘ It was not his fortune to remain unemployed. His

country required his services. She invited him, his sabre, his gold lace, his whiskers, and other appendages, to ride forward and strike terror into the French. He yielded — not with alacrity, for some of his errors were on the side of discretion — but obediently, because he did not dare to draw back. Shame is often the spur to youthful minds. It sends forward the as yet untempered spirit by its recoil, and transmutes mere boys to heroes. It was not without its effect even on Dacre, who, backed by a thousand or two of his comrades, plunged carelessly enough into the *melée*, and was taken prisoner at the first charge, conducted in due time to Verdun, and afterwards, on attempting to escape, was finally lodged in the formidable fortress of Bitche.

‘ To this place it was that Sophy Ellesmere was destined to go. She did not indeed know the precise spot where her lover was confined; but she knew that he was a prisoner, and resolved to attempt his rescue. It was in vain to contend or to reason. Like many resolute spirits, she had a grain or too of the vice of obstinacy mingled with her courage; and after hearing all that could be said against her enterprise, she equipped herself secretly, and, at the age of twenty, set out upon one of the most romantic expeditions that have distinguished modern adventure.

‘ It was a long journey for a young girl to undertake, — to go alone as far as Copenhagen, and thence through many of the States of Germany, into France itself, then a hostile country. Apparently it was a needless circuit; but at that time all the ports of the Continent were shut against us, and Denmark alone remained

neutral. To Denmark, therefore, it was necessary to go. I do not mean to detain the reader with the thousand difficulties that beset our heroine in passing from Denmark, through Holstein, by Hamburg, Bremen, Minden, (once red with slaughter, although then

“All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,”)

Cassel, Frankfort, Heidelberg, (ten times renowned for its tun of Rhenish,) until she set foot in the pretty States of Baden. It is sufficient to say that she arrived there, and found, without much difficulty, the house of M. Villeneuve, who had married the sister of her friend De Mercet, and who, with his wife, received her with distinguished kindness. M. Villeneuve lived at Baden in great retirement; free from all suspicion, however, the names of himself and family having been erased from the list of emigrants, and some portion of his property restored; but not without anxiety regarding their son Henri, whose imagination had taken fire at the splendid exploits of Napoleon, and who himself had rushed into the French ranks, and had already risen to the dignity of serjeant. “He is not far from us,” said Madame Villeneuve, “which comforts me, although he complains bitterly of being appointed to guard the English prisoners, which he calls a degrading service.” It may be easily supposed that our heroine’s curiosity was stimulated by this piece of news. She restrained her agitation, however, and made the necessary inquiry with apparent indifference. “And your son, Madame? He is at ——?” — “He is at the fortress of Bitche,” replied Madame Villeneuve, where

refractory prisoners are sent. The principal dépôt is, as you know, at Verdun, which is farther from us."

'Sophy treasured up the information thus acquired, and resolved to take Bitche by stratagem or storm. She continued for a day or two asking what the lawyers call "leading questions;" but at last the natural candor of her spirit rejected this system of policy. "I cannot go on thus, my kind friends," said she; "I cannot, and I ought not to go on thus. I am deceiving you, and it is fit that all be plain between us. I am journeying to Verdun — to Bitche — to wherever else it is likely that a friend of mine (a young English officer) is detained. He is imprisoned; he is unhappy. I will find him — I will traverse all France but I will find and rescue him," — and here the simpleton burst into a passion of tears. M. Villeneuve looked somewhat serious at this piece of information. He did not wish, to say the truth, to implicate himself and his family in an adventure which seemed to exceed rashness itself. He had been an exile once, and stripped of all his patrimony, and he had no desire — with a son to succeed him — to put himself and his estates in jeopardy again. He was under something like a tacit promise, too, to a friend who had promised to answer for his good conduct; and under the influence of all these things he strenuously dissuaded our heroine from proceeding farther on her travels. His persuasions, however, were vain. The sole hope of many months was not to be thus abandoned; and therefore, after the delay of a few more days, which were occupied partly in obtaining a passport, and in purchasing a variety of small wares and trinkets, (in order to enable

her to traverse the country in the character of an itinerant trader,) she bade adieu to her kind hosts, and set off, by the public conveyance, to Kehl.

‘It was almost dusk when Sophy Ellesmere trod, for the first time, upon the bridge of boats over which the traveller enters Strasbourg. Strasbourg, famous for its snuff, its bells, and its cathedral, had, however, but few charms for our heroine. She accordingly, after having answered the challenge of the sentinel, (who patted her cheek, and let down the wiry muscles of his face into a smile,) and delivered her passport, which authorized Sophie Mercet to travel through various places, enumerating among others, Bitche and Verdun, took up her abode at a humble place of entertainment, and dreamed of success till morning.

‘With the first blush of a September sun she quitted Strasbourg, bade adieu to the beautiful Rhine, and after travelling for a couple of days, arrived on the second evening upon the high land which overlooks the fortress and town of Bitche.

‘The town of Bitche is situate in the department of the Moselle, about forty English miles (as the crow flies) from Strasbourg. It is commanded by its gloomy fortress, a place famous for its strength, as well as remarkable for having been the prison of many Englishmen who had endeavored to escape from the confinement of Verdun. This fortress, which is half buried in a dark looking wood, and which, with its drawbridges and other securities, presents any thing but a pleasant aspect, seemed to the poor way-worn Sophy the haven where her weary voyage was at last to end. She was, it must be owned, a little staggered

by the stern, strong appearance of the place; and it occurred to her that a fortress, which had opposed successfully twenty thousand Prussian soldiers, would scarcely yield to the attack of a single maiden. But she considered, too, that things that had resisted a *coup de main* had at last been undermined by gold, or had yielded to the persevering efforts of human ingenuity. Above all, the desire of success rose up and flushed her cheek, till bars, and bolts, and chains, and draw-bridges, and strong holds, gave way one after another before that unquenchable, irresistible spirit of *Hope*, which burns without dying in the youthful heart.

‘In this state of mind she proceeded till she found herself on the banks of the small lake which lies on one side of the fortress, and in which the bastions and turrets glass themselves, and seem to pore over their own stern and imposing aspects with all the vanity of unquestioned power. The lake — I do not know its name — forms, I believe, the source of the little river La Blise; which falling into the Sarre, soon after swells the current of the Moselle, and thus finally mingles with the famous rapids of the Rhine. On this lake Sophy found various persons casting their nets, (fish forming an article of commerce with some of the inhabitants of Bitche,) whilst others, chiefly females, were waiting on its banks. The evening was closing, and our heroine was without a lodging. She scrutinized, therefore, the countenances of several of the women near her! and at last, fixing her eyes on a broad, open, sunny-faced dame, who stood grinning at the approach of a boat which contained (apparently) her husband, she mentioned her forlorn situation. “I have no

home," said she; "I am wandering—I know not where — after one whom I love." — "*Ciel!*" exclaimed the other; "no home? no home? You must come with us. You shall come with us. You are welcome. You shall have a dish of perch for your supper—and we have a bed too, which is yours. Come along, come along! Here is our Bernard as impatient as ever, although he has got his net full of fish." Bernard the fisherman landed, and after some good-natured peevish exclamations on the inattention of his wife, he broke out into a loud laugh, kissed both her cheeks, and confirmed the welcome which his wife had previously given, with an alacrity, and even grace, that would have done honor to a court.

'Our heroine accompanied the old couple home, and found that their hospitality did not content itself with words. The best of their homely fare was offered — was pressed upon her. She was invited to stay a week — a month — a year; why need she ever leave them? There was enough for all. They' had no children, and needle-work found many purchasers in the neighborhood of the town of Bitche. Sophy listened to all they said with a patient smile, but her heart wandered away after the imprisoned soldier whom she had travelled so many leagues to enfranchise. It was her cue, however, to stay at present at the home of the fisherman; and she did not think it right indeed to give an ungracious and sudden refusal to the proffers of the good-natured couple. She would stay a short time with them. She would consider. She could not remain at Bitche for ever—but she would rest her unquiet spirit a little, and would wait for a smile from

Providence. And accordingly she remained with them during several days, ripening into favor with both, and obtaining, from time to time, amidst the desultory conversations which occurred between Bernard and his neighbors, some little insight into the rules and secrets of the fortress. Neither did she neglect other means of obtaining information. She would take her little basket of wares, and go her rounds amongst the tradesmen and cottagers of the town, and sometimes ventured into the cabarets and other places where the soldiers were allowed to resort, when not upon actual duty.

‘It was on one of these occasions that she came suddenly on a group of French soldiers, who stood chattering together at the door of a small inn, about half musket-shot distance from the fortress. One of these heroes had just completed his harangue as our little Quixote arrived. He was a good-humored looking fellow, and bore marks of service upon him. A gash across the nose, a medal, and the ornaments of a non-commissioned officer, showed that he had made one sturdy step up the hill of fortune. “Well, well, Monsieur from Picardy,” replied one of his companions, “we shall see, we shall see. It is your turn to mount guard to-night.” Sophy listened to these words attentively. Madame de Mercet was a native of Picardy, and she had taught her one or two of her native airs. Her presence of mind instantly suggested that these might be of use. She began and threw all her powers into a song and succeeded. Our Picardian was captivated in a moment. He stood by her as she sang, and tapped his fingers on his arm in accordance

with the tune. Tears stood in his eyes, (for a Frenchman is soon moved by these little national reminiscences,) and our heroine might have risen speedily into his confidence and favor.

‘But it was desirable to preserve her trading character, and she accordingly repressed her curiosity till a better moment should arrive. She turned to his companions, and accosted them. “Messieurs,” said she, curtsying, “will you not lay out a trifle with a poor girl? Gentlemen soldiers,” continued she, “will not you give me a sous piece for charity?”’

“Bah!” said one, “we have enough to do with our money. Give, too! *Sacre!* What are eight sous a day to give with?” He smoked on with a frown that was rigidly philosophical.

“Come hither,” said the Corporal, whose name was Jouvett. “Come hither, my little girl, and tell me what you want, and where you are going?”

“I am going to see my—my lover, Sir,” was the reply.

“Ho, ho, ho!” This was too much for the gravity of the republican heroes; even the smoker could not contain a smile; but the Picardian viewed her with increased interest.

“Soh!” said he, “and where is your lover, Marie? Is not your name Marie, my child?”

“I am called Sophie, Sir,” said our heroine, “and I am going to Verdun, and afterwards to Tours. My friend is a soldier, — poor fellow!”

“Poor fellow!” said the smoker, turning round. “Do you call a man poor fellow who fights under the First Consul? You are a fool.”

“ “ A fond one, at all events,” replied he of Picardy, “ and that is enough for me. Come along, my Demoiselle ; I must call at the house of Bernard the fisherman ; walk by me, I am old enough to save you from scandal. Let us walk together to Bernard’s, and you shall tell me your story by the way.”

‘ But let us hasten with our tale, or we shall become (if we have not already become) tedious. Our heroine used her time effectually in opening a correspondence with Dacre, who she discovered was in the prisons of Bitche, and in planning, in concert with him, his escape. She made acquaintance with the soldiers, many of whom bought of her some trifle as tokens of their good-will, some purchasing cigars, others little buckles, and pins, and ornaments, or casts and prints of the First Consul and his coadjutors, besides various other matters wherein she dealt. Some of these men admired her face, and some her songs, and all her cheerful willing nature. Many, as I have said, laid out money with her ; but I must except one hero, M. Blaise, who, as it chanced, was a Picardian, like our friend Jouvett, but otherwise was his opposite in all things, saving only in his love of songs. It is impossible to say how many times our little patient girl sang, for this rogue’s pleasure, various airs of Picardy. She sang, and was encored, and sang again, till the musketeer was moved into mighty commendations ; but still he would not part with his coin. One night, however, his desire for pleasure overcame this engrossing love for money.

“ “ If you will bring me a skin of wine to the north rampart to-night,” said he, (“ I shall be on guard there,

and will fasten it to a cord, which I will throw across the moat,) I will lay out a double franc piece with you, Mademoiselle. Come! you shall bring it, and sing me a Picardy air."

'Sophy, who was by this time prepared to take advantage of any occasion, however sudden, of forwarding her lover's escape, gradually assented.

"But your Governor will not allow wine at night?" said she inquiringly.

"*N'importe*," returned the valiant Blaise, "we will drink his health, notwithstanding."

'No more objections were made by our heroine, who immediately proceeded to the house of a woman who did work for the fortress, and through whom she contrived to apprise Dacre that the time had arrived for attempting his liberation. To purchase a skin of wine, and dissolve in it some opium which she had stored up from time to time, was all the preparation that Sophy required. Ropes and such things had been previously purchased, and the route of escape arranged.

'It was hard upon midnight when our heroine, trembling for the first time from head to foot, arrived at the side of the moat, where it circles the northern rampart. The skies were almost obscured by vast masses of cloud, and the wailing winds, as they came over the gloomy forest, dashed occasionally a few drops of rain in her face. It was a night fit for such an adventure, and Blaise was there ready (though he knew it not) to forward it. The signal agreed on was a Picardy song; for the soldier's love of music more than rivalled his love of wine.

"You shall sing 'O Picardie!' said Blaise, when

they were agreeing upon a signal, "and nobody will dream about wine."

'It was no easy matter, however, to sing under the circumstances which agitated her; indeed it was not easy (although she had previously reconnoitered the road) to find the way through the darkness to the precise spot where Blaise had asserted that he should be waiting. Sophy, however, proceeded on her course until she heard some of the little runnels of water, which the rains had increased, gurgling and babbling along, and at last falling into the moat. A sudden survey of the fortress, its walls, and windings, and projections, became necessary. This was speedily made, and the north rampart decried without much difficulty. Near this point, it so happened, that Dacre's prison was situate, and it was from that rampart that he and a companion (for one was necessary to the other's escape) should let themselves down into the water, in order to their liberation. The signal, therefore, that was to awaken the attention of Blaise was sufficient for the prisoners also; and it was resolved, that, during the period that the heroic Blaise was occupied with song and wine, the two prisoners should become free men.

'Sophy commenced her song in the lowest breath that terror could produce. "Who goes?" said a deep harsh tongue. She recognised the tone of a soldier whom she knew, but gave no reply, and passed on with almost noiseless steps. She was now near the point that Blaise had specified, and she sang once more in a bolder key. "Ah, ha! Picardie, are you there?" asked the voice of Blaise. "Who calls?" said Sophy; but

she received no answer, for at that moment the tramp of feet was heard above, and the answer, "All's well!" resounded through the silence. Blaise himself had apparently departed at the first sound of footsteps, but soon returning, he gave orders to the sentinels in a loud voice, as though to assure Sophy that no discovery had occurred. He placed all the sentinels at their posts excepting one, whose post he volunteered to take; an offer that was willingly accepted. In a minute there was no one within hearing except Sophy and the soldier Blaise—save that *within* the walls of the prison, Dacre, and his companion Carlton, were listening for a repetition of the signal song. This was speedily given, and they then commenced their labors.

"Before we sing we must drink," said Blaise, and threw over the wall a cord, to which he had fastened a tolerably heavy stone. He threw scarcely far enough, and the stone rolled back into the moat. A second cast, however, and the exclamation, "*Sacre!*" made all right. Sophy tied the skin of wine to the cord, and began singing like a thrush. At this moment proceedings of a similar nature were going on at a little distance, and the fall of some rope, or hook, into the water, awakened the attention of Blaise. "What was that?" said he, "I heard something drop into the moat. Wait here, and I will go my round and return."

"Stop!" replied our heroine, "you are easily frightened for a soldier. It was I—I was too careless; I threw the stone that was fastened to your cord into the water, and Monsieur Blaise, who has faced the Austrians, was alarmed."

'This answer appeared satisfactory, for Blaise in a

trice inserted a tube into the top of the skin, and took a formidable draught of liquor. "That is a brave skin of wine," said he; "I have paid ten francs for no better, and yet you charge me but two. You are a good girl, and shall sing me a song as a reward." Sophy thought for an instant — (how much we may recollect in an instant of time!) — of her own perilous situation — of her hopes — of her own native place — how desolate indeed — but she recollected it as it was when the poor Marie de Mercet was living, and she poured forth in sweet low tones her little Picardian song. There is not much in the words; but the air is simple and beautiful.

"O Picardie! O Picardie!
No home for me like Picardie!
The sun may rise
In other skies,
But nought like the sun of Picardie.

"The grape is bred in Picardie,
And the apple is red as e'er you'll see,
And the yellow corn
Where I was born,
Is the richest in all dear Picardie!

"And the girls dance light in Picardie!
And their eyes are bright where I would be,
And the men are fleet,
And the songs are sweet, —
O, sweet, sweet songs of Picardie!

"But what is all else in Picardie,
Dear home of mine, compared with thee?
When the wars are o'er
I'll march no more,
But live and die in Picardie!"

'The song was repeated at the urgent request of the sentinel; but, at the conclusion of the encore, the quick ear of Sophy heard a gentle splash occasioned by the immersion of some body in water, and she hastened, after a few more words, to quit her military acquaintance.

"The rain is coming on," said she, "and I must bid you good night."

"Good night, my little Demoiselle," returned Blaise in a dull tone, which announced that during the singing he had employed himself in copious and effectual libations; "Good night, — you will come and sing me Picardie again — eh?"

"Never fear," answered Sophy, and left him to certain slumber.

She found that Dacre had arrived safely on the other side of the moat, but that his companion was still within the limits of the prison. The rope had somehow become entangled, and he just reached the ground with great difficulty. There was still another impediment, and the moat also to ford.

"Come," said Dacre, when he saw her, "let us be off. I should not have waited here a second, but that I could not find the way without you."

"But your friend?" inquired Sophy; "where is Mr. Carlton?"

"Oh, by Jupiter! I can't wait for him; he must take his chance," was the reply.

"He has risked his life to aid your escape; and if you leave him, you leave him to certain punishment — perhaps to death." This was the language of her apprehensions.

“Tush!” said Dacre hastily; “in these cases we must not be too nice. Let us be gone. Every minute is worth a thousand pounds to *me*, and I must proceed accordingly. *Allons!*”

‘But Sophy still continued to look at the place whence she expected Carlton to come, and did not move, notwithstanding the urgent entreaties of her lover. He was violent and impatient, but she remained firm to her principle. “Stay, Sir, stay!” said she; “this is not the way to do our duty. Your friend must be saved. Ah! see—he comes—the wall is scaled—he is in the moat—hush! gently—he is over—is safe! Now then, take up the port-manteau, and let us begone, as you say.”

‘They took their way for about a quarter of a mile straight in the direction of Huinegen. At this point they retired and clad themselves in dry habits, leaving their wet clothes and some fragments of rope (as, indeed, they had once or twice previously done) to mislead pursuit. They then turned short round a path pointed out by Sophy, and took a westward course towards the forest. “Observe,” said she to them, “you will skirt the left bank of the lake; then, take the green path into the forest—keep on straight for nearly half a mile, and at the cross-roads, where the great chestnut-tree stands in the middle, wait for me amongst the bushes by the road-side. I will call out ‘*Venez,*’ and you will then know that it is I.” At this moment the roll of a drum, and a musket-shot from the fortress, announced that their flight had been discovered. “Come along, Carlton,” said Dacre; “those ropes which you left hanging on the window have

betrayed us." "Farewell!" said Carlton, approaching our heroine and taking her hand, "if we meet no more, God bless you, and farewell!" "We shall meet," replied she; "I shall be with you shortly; but now, speed, and away!" There was no need for entreaty; for while Sophy was weighing the careless words of Dacre, and the solemn farewell of his friend, the quick walk (almost the run) of a small body of men struck on their ears, and they turned rapidly on their course towards the forest. Sophy herself went home to the fisherman's cottage, for some provision which she had been unable before to bring, and also to answer any visit that the soldiers might make there. "I shall be with you in half an hour, or an hour," said she; and the prisoners and their *liberator* parted.

'Harry Dacre and his companion reached, without much difficulty, the cross-roads in the forest of Bitche, and there, concealing themselves amongst the fern and brambles that skirted the green pathway, they awaited the coming of their preserver. All was solitary and still on their arrival, except that now and then the winds broke upon the forest in huge gusts, and made the cones of the pine-trees rattle, while overhead in the sky large masses of cloud began to assemble, threatening rain. Occasionally, the fall of a leaf disturbed them; or the willows or sycamores, sighing with all their boughs, appeared to lament their destinies forlorn. Dacre gave way to despair, and cursed the unkindnesses of fortune; while Carlton, of a more steady temperament, collected all the energies of his soul, and awaited the result with a brave patience. In

this state they remained at least half an hour, when suddenly Carlton exclaimed, in a quick whisper, "Hark! I hear footsteps." "She is come at last, then," said Dacre, rising; "I never before so much wished to see her." He was about to walk onwards to meet her, when his companion pulled him down. "Stop!" said he, "drop down amongst the bushes, or you will be lost: 'tis the tramp of a horse;" and he pulled him down without ceremony, till the danger, if such it were, had passed. Once or twice, after this first alarm, the two freed men were compelled again to hide, till at last, after an hour of terrible anxiety and some peril, a light quick footstep was heard coming along the path from Bitche. The person was hurrying, and almost running onwards, and her short and loudly-drawn breath showed that she was almost spent with fatigue. "It is our little friend, at last," said Carlton; and our heroine stood before them.

"I have had great difficulties," said she, after a moment's pause for breath. "I am suspected, notwithstanding all my pains; and I fear that I too must fly. At all events, however, I have brought you something necessary to your expedition." Saying which, she took from her shoulders a bag containing some small loaves of bread and cold meat, the amount of the good dame Bernard's larder. Dacre seized the provision. "We will divide the labor between us," said he to Carlton; "I will carry this for the first hour, and then I will shift it upon you. Sophy, my girl, good by t'ye: you're a devilish clever lass, and have managed the matter famously. One kiss, and then tell us which way our route lies out of the forest, and

we will begone." He was proceeding to take his farewell in the fashion he mentioned, when Sophy once more spoke: it was with great hesitation and evident pain. "I told you, if you remember, that I must leave this place. I am suspected, and my life is threatened. I am very unwilling to encumber your flight, but —" "But, what?" inquired Dacre impatiently. "Why — I thought — that you would not refuse, perhaps, to take me with you." "Impossible!" said Dacre, "we should be retaken in a couple of hours. I know you would not wish us to be imprisoned again. It is quite out of the question, believe me." But Carlton could not brook this selfishness of his associate. "Dacre," said he, "she must go with us. What! after having saved us both, shall we do nothing for *her*?" "I tell you she cannot go," replied Harry. "Sophy, my dear," continued he, "you *must* see that the thing is impossible. Depend on't, the rascals wont harm *you*: 'tis only *us* — 'tis *men*, child, that they put in prison. Come, come, all will be safe. Go back to your old fisherman and his wife, and all will turn out well, I engage. Come along, Carlton, we haven't a moment to lose." Sophy stood in bitter wonder at the hard levity and detestable ingratitude of her lover. Even love, if love can so soon perish, seemed growing cold in her own bosom, and receding. All that she had done and suffered for him shot in a single instant through her brain, and flashed despair upon her. "Will you not save me, then?" said she, timidly and slowly; "I — I saved *you*." Dacre turned on his heel, but his more magnanimous companion took her hand tenderly, and with

respect. "You have saved us *both*," said he, "and may God desert me if I leave you till you are safe. Mr. Dacre," he continued, "you may go — you may do as you like; but *I* and Miss Ellesmere go together. If you choose to leave us — why be it; but remember, Sir, that the first person who attempts to betray her, or impede her flight, shall have a bullet through his brain — and so let us understand each other clearly."

'By this time the rain, which had begun to fall gently, came down in formidable showers. They set off, however, Carlton and his friend, followed by the glooming Dacre. The plashy and slippery ground rendered their course difficult even at first, and finally it became desperately fatiguing. The two men, although accustomed to rougher exercise than their companion, did not, however, stand up better against the troubles of their progress than the little light-footed, brave-hearted girl, who had come so many miles to their rescue. She walked on stoutly, and with almost a merry heart. Even the men caught a tone from her courage, and seemed rising into hope and exhilaration, when the short sharp whistle of a bullet amongst the trees near them turned their attention to their own safety. They stopped, but had not remained a minute stationary, when the sound of heavy feet treading amongst the brambles and leaves told them that some one was close upon them. In an instant a figure stood before them on the path. Their eyes had grown so accustomed to the dim light about them, that they could see it was an armed man who opposed their progress. "*Qui vive?*" exclaimed a stern voice, while at the same time the cocking of a pistol an-

nounced a formidable foe. Carlton, who was a good linguist, began a statement of their having lost their way, when the soldier (for such the new comer was) bade him be silent in an imperious tone, and lifting something that looked like a bugle to his lips, was about to call in a reinforcement. Not a moment was to be lost, and not a moment *was* lost. The intrepid Carlton plunged directly upon him. So sudden was the onset, that the pistol was dashed from his hands, and the horn or bugle instantly displaced from his mouth. Neither spoke, but a short struggle was heard, like that of two animals fighting for life amongst the crackling leaves. Once or twice a blow resounded amidst the panting and short-breathing of the combatants, whose strife was made doubly terrible by the darkness about them. It was evident that the death of one or the other must conclude the affray. Dacre and the now agitated Sophy awaited the event in frightful anxiety, when suddenly a short cry, a curse, and a rattling of the voice in the throat, announced that the victory was won—and lost! A slight blow ensued, and was itself followed by a sound like the bubbling of blood or water. At last one of the men rose up, with a deep sigh, and staggering to a tree, exclaimed, in English, “He is dead! I could not help it. It was necessary that one should fall—or three. He is dead. Let us leave this place at once—silently—and quickly—quickly!” His companions made no reply, but followed him quickly and silently through the melancholy forest darkness.’

Our sexagenarian could get no farther with his

story : he would, indeed, have gone on telling every minute and tedious particular of the escape, (for the three people of his story *did* escape,) but that the time limited for the evening's labor was exhausted, and the old gentleman was obliged to pause.

'It is too bad to leave off before the story is concluded,' said I, (desirous of paying the old gentleman a compliment); 'come ! we have still ten minutes left before supper. Mr. —— shall tell us the remainder of his tale in half a dozen sentences, and then we shall go to rest contentedly. Did your party escape, Mr. —— ? or were they sent back to the prisons of Bitche ?'

'They escaped,' replied Mr. ——, 'and are safe enough, I' faith ! and two of them are merry enough, also.'

'I am sorry for that,' retorted I ; 'I like that there should be poetical justice in all stories, and your lover deserved rather to be hanged than married.'

'He is *not* married,' was the answer, 'and he *may* be hanged. Far more improbable things have occurred in the history of the world.'

'But what became of your heroine ? She is really a heroine ; for she had a man's courage in her woman's heart.'

'Oh !' said Mr. ——. 'Why, Sir, it was impossible, you see, that she should link herself to such a lump of selfishness as the scoundrel to whom she gave her girl's heart away. Her travels had improved her reason ; so she turned off the worthless lover, (if I may profane that pretty word, Sir,) and took an excellent

fellow to her arms, and is as happy as the day is long. I do not know a more beautiful sight, indeed, than to look at my friend Mrs. — *Carlton*, with all her children about her'

1829.

THE PLANTER.

FIFTY — sixty — seventy (any given number of) years ago, the West Indies were not as they are now, in these days of purity. The colonists were not then meek, modest, humane, temperate, independent people, and lovers of *liberty*. On the contrary, they were at *that* time boastful, and luxurious ; loved scheidam and pine-apple rum ; worshipped their superiors in station, and despised everybody below themselves. Thus the newly imported Englishmen held the regular colonists in utter contempt ; the colonists (a white race) requited themselves, by condemning the mustees and quadroons ; these last, on their parts, heartily despised the half castes ; who, in turn, transmitted the scorn on to the heads of the downright blacks. Whom the blacks despised, I never could learn, but probably all the rest : and, in fact. they seem to have had ample cause for so doing, unless the base, beggarly, and cruel vanity imputed to their ‘ superiors,’ be at once a libel and a fable.

Such was the state of things in the Colony of Demerara in the year 17—, when a young Englishman went there, in order to inspect his newly acquired

property. His name was John Vivian. He came of a good family in D——shire; possessed (without being at all handsome) a dark, keen, intelligent countenance; and derived from his maternal uncle large estates in Demerara, and from his father a small farm in his own county, a strong constitution, and a resolute, invincible spirit. Perhaps, he had too much obstinacy of character; perhaps, also, an intrepidity of manner, and carelessness of established forms, which would have been unsuitable to society as now constituted. All this we will not presume to determine. We do not wish to extenuate his faults, of which he had as handsome a share as usually falls to the lot of young gentlemen who are under no control; although not precisely of the same character. In requital for these defects, however, he was a man of firm mind, of a generous spirit, and would face danger, and stand up against oppression, as readily on behalf of others as of himself; and, at the bottom of all, though it had lain hid from his birth, (like some of those antediluvian fossils which perplex our geologists and antiquaries,) he had a tenderness and delicacy of feeling, which must not be passed by, without, at least, *our* humble commendation.

Exactly eight weeks from the day of his stepping on board the good ship ‘Wager,’ at Bristol, Vivian found himself standing on the shore of the river Demerara, and in front of its capital, Stabroek. In that interval, he had been tossed on the wild waters of the Atlantic; had passed from woollens to nankeens, from English cold to tropic heat; and he now stood eyeing the curious groups of the colony, where creatures of every

shade, from absolute sable to pallid white, might be seen, for the trouble only of a journey.

But we have a letter of our hero on this subject, written to a friend in England, on his landing, which we will unfold for the reader's benefit. Considering that the writer had the range of foolscap before him, and was transmitting news from the torrid to the temperate zone, it may at least lay claim to the virtue of brevity. Thus it runs : —

‘ To Richard Clinton, Esq., &c., &c., Middle Temple, London, England.

‘ Well, Dick ! — Here am I, thy friend, John Vivian, safely arrived at the country of cotton and tobacco. Six months ago, I would have ventured a grosschen that nothing on this base earth could have tempted me to leave foggy England ; but the unkennelling a knave was a temptation not to be resisted, and accordingly I am here, as you see.

‘ Since I shook your hand at Bristol, I have seen somewhat of the world. The Cove of Cork, — the Madeiras, — the Peak of Teneriffe, — the flying fish, — the nautilus, — the golden-finned Dorado, — the deep blue seas, — and the tropic skies, — are matters which some would explain to you in a chapter. But I have not the pen of a ready writer ; so you must be content with a simple enumeration.

‘ My voyage was, like all voyages, detestable. I began with sea-sickness and piercing winds ; I ended with headache and languor, and weather to which your English dog-days are a jest. The burning, blazing heat was so terrific, that I had well nigh oozed away

into a sea-god. Nothing but the valiant army of bottles which your care provided could have saved me. My mouth was wide open, like the seams of our vessel; but, unlike them, it would not be content with water. I poured in draught after draught of the brave liquor. I drank deep healths to you and other friends; till, at last, the Devil, who broils Europeans in these parts, took to his wings and fled. Thus it was, Clinton, that I arrived finally at Demerara.

‘But now comes your question of “What sort of a place is this same Demerara?” I’ faith, Dick, ’tis flat and stupid enough. The run up the river is, indeed, pretty; and there are trees enough to satisfy even your umbrageous taste. It is, in truth, a land of woods,—at least, on one side; and you may roam among orange and lemon trees and guavas and mangoes, amidst aloes and cocoa-nut and cotton and mahogany trees, till you would wish yourself once more on a Lancashire moor. Stabroek, our capital, is a place where the houses are built of wood; where melons, and oranges, and pine-apples grew as wild as thyself, Dick; and where black, brown, white, and whity-brown people, sangaree and cigars, abound. Of all these marvels I shall know more shortly. I lodge here at the house of a Dutch planter, where you must address me under my travelling cognomen. John Vivian is extinct for a season; but your letter will find me, if it be addressed to “Mr. John Vernon, to the care of Mynheer Schlachenbrüchen, Merchant, in Demerara.” That respectable individual would die the death of shame, did he know that he held the great “proprietor,” Vivian, in his garret. At present, I am

nothing more than a poor *protégé* of Messrs. Greffulhe, come out to the hot latitudes for the sake of health and employment.

‘You shall hear from me again speedily; in the mean time, write to me at length. This letter is a preface merely to the innumerable number of good things which I design to scribble for your especial instruction. It leaves for you only a certificate of my safe arrival, and the assurance that I am, as ever, your true friend,
‘VIVIAN.’

Vivian was, in fact, tolerably pleased with the banks of the river, fringed as it was with trees, and spotted with cottages; but when he actually trod upon the ground of the new world, and found himself amidst a crowd of black and tawny faces—amidst hats like umbrellas, paroquets, and birds of every color of the rainbow, and children, almost as various, plunging in and out of the river like water-dogs or mud-larks,—he could not conceal his admiration, but laughed outright.

He was not left long to his contemplations, however, for the seaport of a West Indian Colony has as many volunteers of all sorts as Dublin itself. A score of blacks were ready to assist him with his luggage, and at least a dozen of free negresses and mulattoes had baskets of the best fruit in the world. He might have had a wheelbarrow full for sixpence, and the aid of a dozen Sambos for an insignificant compliment in copper. Neglecting these advantages, Vivian made the best of his way to the house of the Mynheer Schlachtenbrüchen, the Fleming, which was well known to

all the clamorous rogues on the quay. The merchant was not at home ; having retired, as usual, to sleep at his plantation-house, a few miles from town. Our hero, however, was received, with slow and formal respect, by his principal clerk, Hans Wassel, a strange figure, somewhat in the shape of a cone, that had originally sprung up (and almost struck root) somewhere near Ghent or Bruges. Holding Vivian's credentials at arms length, this 'shape' proceeded to decipher the address of the letter through an enormous pair of iron spectacles. In due time he appeared to detect the handwriting of the London correspondent ; for he snorted out 'Aw ! Mynheer Franz Greffulhe !' and proceeded to open a seal as big as a saucer, and investigate the contents. These were evidently satisfactory ; for he put on a look of benevolence, and welcomed the new comer (who was announced as Mr. Vernon) to Stabroek. 'You will take a schnap ?' inquired he with a look which anticipated an affirmation. 'As soon as you please,' replied Vivian ; to which the other retorted with another 'Aw' and left the room with something approaching to alertness, in order to give the necessary orders.

The ordinary domestics of the Fleming were much more rapid in their movements, for Vivian had scarcely time to look round and admire the neatness of the room, when a clatter at the door compelled him to turn his eyes to that quarter. He saw a lively looking black come in, with a large pipe of curious construction, and a leaden box containing tobacco, followed close by his co-mate Sambo, (another 'nigritude,') who bore in both hands a huge glass, almost as big as

a punch-bowl, filled to the brim with true Nantz, tempered, but not injured, by a small portion of water. Sambo appeared justly proud of his burthen, which he placed on the table in its original state of integrity; for, after looking for a moment lovingly at the liquid, he turned round to Vivian, and said exultingly, 'Dere, Massa!'

But we need not detain the reader with any detail of our hero's movements on his arrival in the colony, excepting one or two, which have direct reference to the present narrative. He was introduced to Mynheer Schlachenbrüchen and his wife, each of whom, were our limits larger, might fairly lay claim to commemoration. As it is, we must pass them by, and content ourselves with stating the fact of their (the merchant at all events) treating Vivian with more consideration than his ostensible rank demanded, and introducing him to their family and friends. The person, however, into whose society Vivian was more especially thrown, was a young girl who performed the offices of governess, &c., &c., in the house of the Mynheer Schlachenbrüchen. The visitors of the family avoided her as though she had the plague, (even the Mynheer himself preserved a distance); and the consequence was that Vivian, himself rather looked down upon by the colonial aristocracy, felt himself drawn nearer to the friendless girl, and assiduously cultivated her good opinion. This, however, was not a thing to be easily attained. Sophie Halstein (for that was her name) had few of the qualities commonly ascribed to thriving governesses. She was, indeed, an acute-minded and even accomplished girl; but she was as little supple,

demure, or humble, as Vivian himself. In fact, she received our hero's advances with indifferent cordiality at first; but the magic of sincerity will win its way, and they accordingly, at last, became excellent friends. The thing which surprised our hero the most was, how it was possible for the dull, gross, unenlightened block-heads of the colony to feel, or even affect, a disdain for one who was evidently so much their superior. At last the truth came upon him — she was the child of a *quadroon*! She was lovely, graceful, virtuous, intellectual, accomplished, modest — a model for women; but she had a particle — scarcely apparent, indeed, but still there *was* a particle or two — a few drops of blood of a warmer tinge than what loiters through the pallid cheeks of an European: and hence she was visited by universal contempt.

'Ten thousand curses on their narrow souls!' was Vivian's first exclamation. 'She shall be my friend, my — my — sister. The senseless, brutal wretches! They little think that, under the mask of Vernon, the wealthiest of their tribe is amongst them, and that he respects the little Pariah beyond the whole of their swollen and beggarly race.' A very short time was sufficient for him to form a determination to rescue the object of his admiration from her painful state of servitude. Not being accustomed, however, to deal with the delicacies of ladies, he plunged at once into the matter with headlong rashness.

'You are badly off, Miss Halstein?' said Vivian to her one morning, in his very bluntest tone.

'I do not complain, Sir,' replied she, coldly.

‘I am sorry for you,’ said he, hesitatingly, ‘and would help you.’

‘Spare your pity!’ returned the lady, ‘we have neither of us much to thank fortune for. Yet you are content, or seem so; and so also can I be. We will talk on another subject.’

‘S’death!’ exclaimed the other, recollecting his incognito, ‘I had forgot. Pardon me, I was a fool. You will think me mad with my offers of help and my show of pity, but it is not so. I am sane enough, and some of these days you shall confess it. Come; will you not go with us up the river? We are to run up almost as far as the Sandhills to-morrow, to visit the Reynestein Estate and the Palm Groves which belong to the rich Englishman, Vivian. Perhaps you were never there?’

‘I was born there,’ was the reply; and it was somewhat tremulously uttered.

‘Ha! then you will be delighted to visit the spot, no doubt. Did you know the late proprietor?’

‘Too well,’ said she; ‘he was — a villain.’

‘How, Madam?’ Vivian was forgetting himself again at this attack on his uncle’s memory; but he hastened to recover. ‘I mean the *last* owner,’ he resumed, ‘whose name was, I think, Morson.’

‘I knew him, Sir; and, as I have said, too well. Do you know by what luck it was that he obtained the Palm Groves? No? Then I will tell you, Sir. His predecessor was a careless, easy, and very old man. By a series of unforeseen reverses, by the failure of correspondents, and the roguery of friends, he became involved at last. All that he wanted, however, was

a little money for present exigencies; with that, and a course of economy for a few years, he might have retrieved his broken fortunes. His most intimate friend and neighbor was this Morson. Who, then, more likely than he to help him with a loan of money? He was rich and childless; but the old planter whom I have spoken of had one single child — a girl. Pity, therefore, as well as friendship, might move Morson to aid him in his extremity. And he *did* aid him; at least he lent him money, at the instigation of his manager —'

'Seyton?' asked Vivian, interrupting her.

'Yes, Seyton,' replied she, 'who coveted the old planter's daughter for a wife, and who thought that, if the parent were ruined, his child would be glad of any refuge. He dreamed that she, who had interfered often between him and his victims, would forget all her old abhorrence, and unite her fate with that of the most barbarous tyrant that ever disgraced even a West Indian colony. Well, Sir, to end this tedious story —'

'It is most interesting to me,' said Vivian — 'deeply, deeply interesting;' and his glowing eyes and earnest attention were sufficient proofs that he spoke truly.

'Well, Sir, the end was that Morson advanced the money; that Seyton intrigued with the slaves, and caused many of them to revolt and run away into the woods; and that the poor old man fell from trouble into want, and from want into absolute despair. His plantations were useless; his crops perished on the ground for want of slaves; his mills and buildings were burnt by unknown hands; and finally, his hard and avaricious creditor, the relentless Morson, came

upon him, and took possession of all his estates for a debt amounting to one sixth of their value. The old man' — (Miss Halstein's voice shook at this part, and betrayed great agitation,) — 'the old man soon afterwards died, and his only child was cast upon the world to earn her bitter bread. This is all, Sir. I have given you the history of one half of Mr. Vivian's property: perhaps the other' (she spoke this with some acrimony) 'is held upon a similar tenure.'

'God forbid!' said Vivian. 'But Seyton? — Did he urge his suit?'

'He did, and was refused. And therefore it is (for he is a bad and revengeful man) that I am fearful of coming upon an estate of which he is, essentially, the master. In the absence of Mr. Vivian, his power is uncontrolled; and there is no knowing what claim he might urge against me. He once hinted that I was born a slave on the Palm Grove Estate, and, as such, belonged to his master. I, who am the own daughter of Wilhelm Halstein, to whom all, but a few years ago, belonged.'

'*You!*' exclaimed our hero. "Are *you* the person whom Vivian intercepts? He shall do it no more. Rest content, Miss Halstein. Vivian is not the man to injure any one, and least of all yourself. Go with us to-morrow — I beg, I pray, that you will. I pledge my honor — my soul, that you shall not be a sufferer.'

The lady still refused, however, and it was not until the old merchant (Schlachenbrüchen, to whom Vivian had spoken privately in the meantime) had also given his solemn promise to protect her, that she consented to go. She was a little surprised, indeed, at Vivian's

urging the matter so vehemently ; but as the merchant seconded his requests, somewhat perhaps in the shape of a command, she did not persist in refusing.

A row up the river Demerara, past Diamond Point to the Sandhills, need not call for any particular description. We will suppose that the party had arrived at the Palm Grove Estate, which the merchant (authorized by a power transmitted by Vivian from England) had come to overlook.

The party were introduced to Seyton, a ferocious looking man, of middle age, who, with a mixture of self-consequence and ambiguous civility, welcomed the merchant and his companions. He took no notice of Vivian, indeed, but when he saw Miss Halstein (who leant on our hero's arm) his eyes sparkled and his lips curled, and turning to the merchant, he said hastily, 'Before you leave the estate, there is a point of some consequence that I must take leave to mention, respecting this young person ;' and he touched her, as he spoke, with the point of the cane that he carried in his hand.

'Stand off, fellow !' said Vivian angrily, 'another touch, or another insolent word, and I will lay you at my feet.'

The other started, and examined our hero's appearance, cautiously and sullenly. He saw nothing, however, except an athletic figure and a resolute countenance, and retreated from collision with so formidable an opponent. He did not, however, retreat from his demand.

'Observe, Mynheer,' said he, addressing the mer-

chant once more, 'I speak as the agent only of Mr. Vivian. This gentleman will scarcely blame me for insisting on the rights of my principal.'

'By no means — by no means,' replied the merchant. 'All in good time. We will talk of that, presently. In the mean time, we will look at the balances. After that we will ask what your larder contains; and then — for the rights you speak of. Eh, Mr. Vernon, is not that the way?'

'Certainly, certainly,' said Vivian. 'Miss Halstein will leave all to you; I am quite sure that she may do so safely.'

Two or three hours were sufficient to overlook the accounts, and to dispose of the refreshments, which were offered with some degree of parade to the visitors, at the expense of the estate. Vivian ate heartily, and without scruple, of the produce of his own property; and everything unpleasant seemed forgotten, except by Miss Halstein, when the party (which had been augmented, as agreed upon, by the arrival of the Syndic, from Stabroek,) prepared to go.

'Now,' said Seyton, 'I must once more draw your attention to my demand. I claim this — lady, if you will, — as a slave. She was born on the estate, has never been made free, and belongs of right to my principal, Vivian.'

'Bah! man,' exclaimed the merchant; 'I thought all that was past. Surely, good wine and excellent nantz must have washed all such bad thoughts out of your head. Come, let us go. Sophie, girl, take hold of Mr. Vernon's arm, and —'

'By your leave it must not be so,' said Seyton im-

peratively. He rung a bell, and eight or ten black slaves appeared. 'You are at liberty to go, gentlemen; but the lady remains with me. Have I not the law with me?' added he, addressing the Syndic.

That officer assented, adding, however, that all depended on the will of Vivian. The lady might, indeed, be entitled to her liberty; but until she proved her freedom, she must remain the property of the planter.

'That is sufficient,' said Seyton, 'I am Vivian's representative.'

'Then I am lost,' exclaimed Sophie.

'Pardon me,' replied the Syndic, 'Mr. Seyton is superseded. Mynheer, here, has the power of appointing a manager over his property. Besides which, Mr. Vivian himself has arrived at Stabroek —'

'Ha!' — said Seyton, 'then no time is to be lost. Superseded or not, Mr. Vivian shall not lose his property. Do your duty, fellows,' added he, addressing the slaves. 'Seize upon that woman, in the name of your master, Vivian.'

'Back, I say,' said our hero, pulling out a brace of pistols, and pointing them towards the advancing negroes. 'Back, men, and be wise. And you, Mr. Manager, or whatever you are, take heed how you overstep your duty. Know, Sirrah, that your master does not think your false accounts the worst part of your bad history. Your cruelty to these poor slaves beneath you has come to his ears; and for that he dismisses you from his service. For your impudent and unfounded claim upon this lady, whom your master *loves* —'

‘What!’ exclaimed Sophie; but the merchant restrained her surprise.

‘Whom your master loves, wooes, and whom if Heaven is propitious (he says this doubtingly and humbly), he will wed. For *this* atrocious insult there is no punishment great enough. Yet, if any attempt be made upon her, you shall at least be chastised to your heart’s content. Be satisfied that I do not jest, and remain quiet.’

‘We are all armed, Mr. Seyton,’ said the merchant; ‘you had better let us depart quietly.’

‘She shall not go,’ replied Seyton, foaming with rage. ‘Once more, seize upon her, men; seize upon her for your master, Vivian. Till he comes, I will be obeyed at least.’

‘*He is here!*’ said Vivian, rushing between Sophie and her adversaries — ‘he is here: he overlooks you and will punish you. Look, slaves, I AM VIVIAN, — *your master!* Obey me as you value the liberty which every man on my estate shall have, — if he deserves it.’

‘What he says is true. This is, indeed, Mr. Vivian,’ said the merchant; and the Syndic corroborated his tale.

All was quiet in an instant. Yet Sophie Halstein still looked overcome.

‘What is this?’ inquired the merchant: ‘you ought to be rejoiced.’

‘I am,’ she replied. ‘But, Mr. Vivian, you have something to forget. Can you forgive me?’

‘I cannot,’ answered Vivian, ‘unless with the Palm

Groves, (which from this moment is all your own) you take an incumbrance with it.'

'And that is — ?' said Miss Halstein, inquiringly —

'It is *myself*, Sophie,' replied Vivian, tenderly. 'Prithee, be generous : and think what a way I have wandered from home. Take pity on me, and give me shelter with you at the Palm Groves.'

'We will talk of this hereafter,' said Miss Halstein, gently, and dropping her eyes upon the ground.

'What a strange lover he is,' whispered the Syndic to the merchant.

'That is true enough ;' answered the other. 'Yet, I would wager a grosschen that he succeeds. He is a fine, intrepid, persevering young fellow ; and such men seldom fail in anything they set their hearts upon.'

The old merchant was a true prophet. For before three months had elapsed, the pretty Sophie became lawful mistress of the heart and household of Vivian. The Reynestein flourished ; but the Palm Groves became their home. In the course of time the blacks on their estates emerged from the condition of bondmen ; but remained as cultivators, attracted equally by kind treatment, and an equitable share of the profits of their labors.

'After all, the greatest pleasure in the world,' said Vivian one day to his wife, 'is conferring pleasure ; and perhaps the greatest pleasure which one can confer, is to give Freedom to one's fellow-man.'

VICISSITUDES IN A LAWYER'S LIFE.

SOME years ago, a friend of mine was called up to London, as being the representative of a person that had lately died intestate. The deceased had been a barrister of some reputation with his class, but in small practice : and, not having during his life been very communicative respecting his affairs, it was thought necessary that my friend (who was his cousin and next to kin) should personally superintend the opening of his desk and papers, and endeavor to ascertain the amount of property to which he had become heir. Being myself somewhat of a man of business, although no lawyer, I accompanied him on these occasions, and assisted him on all others with my friendship and advice. After long and careful investigation, however, we could discover nothing in the shape of money, beyond a sum of £120 stock in the Three per Cents., together with a few sovereigns and some loose silver in his chambers. He had evidently lived, from day to day, on what his profession brought him. There was, indeed, an indifferent law library, which we disposed of for forty or fifty pounds, and a few precedents, (of conveyances, bills and answers in

chancery, and such like things,) which we charitably presented to the clerk; but nothing farther worthy of mention,—excepting only the manuscript, of which a copy is given below. This was found lying, with other unimportant papers, in the drawer of his table, and having been tied up with red tape, and written on what the lawyers call draft paper, was at first mistaken by us for a matter of business. Just, however, as my friend was handing over the bundle to the clerk, a few letters which were on the back caught my attention, and, on looking closer, I perceived the words, ‘Some account of my life.’ Being curious in my reading, (for which, however, I have but little time to spare from my business,) I begged the manuscript from my friend, who was delighted at an opportunity of making some return for my exertions. I had no thoughts of rendering the matter public, as will easily be believed; but a literary acquaintance having run his eye over it, recommended me to print it. He offered, moreover, to ‘polish it up,’ and ‘make it fit for the press;’ but (though I listened to his recommendation as to publishing) I determined that it should appear in its natural dress, if it appeared at all. I am one of those who think that the feelings of an individual can be best expressed in his own unstudied language. Independently of this, I was desirous of exhibiting to the world what Mr. Coleridge calls ‘a psychological curiosity,’ or, in other words, the autobiography of a lawyer, who, after having dwelt in the midst of forms and tautologies for twenty years, had courage to write like a rational being, and to put down his thoughts in common language. The parallel of ‘the dyer’s hand’

(which the great poet, Shakspeare, adverts to) does not, as it appears to me, hold good upon all occasions. But I will not detain the reader any longer from the counsellor's manuscript. The following is a verbatim copy of it, made by my own hand, and carefully examined with the original : —

THE LAWYER'S STORY.

‘ . . . Had I followed the example of my fathers, I should now be a farmer of thirty acres, on the banks of a little stream that runs into the Somersetshire Avon. My ancestors had vegetated there for the greater part of a couple of centuries; few of them having ever exceeded, during their lives, the limit of twenty miles from the village church, and all of them having been born and buried there. Even I myself should probably have trod the same quiet and confined course, had not a solitary spark of ambition flamed up in my father's heart, and fired him to do honor to the family name. For we descended originally from a noble and very ancient stock; and we never forgot it. “ *The —s were knighted at the Conquest!* ” This was the sentence that kept the pride and vanity boiling in our bloods. Like the secret hoard of the miser, it cheered us in our poverty: perhaps it also nourished a vague feeling of honor, and saved us from committing unworthy actions; but this is doubtful. We had passed through eight or ten generations since we could boast of unmixed nobility; and ever since that time we had been mingling our blood, marriage after marriage, with the yeoman's and the peasant's. Our wealth had been dissipated, our

consequence humbled, our minds overgrown with ignorance; but the *pride*, the "airy nothing" of our name, survived all changes and disasters. Thus the human taste (I mean the bodily sense) which appears to be so oblivious, is known to retain its impressions longer than any other faculty. The mind forgets a name or an image, a peculiar touch, a note of music; but an odor or a flavor is remembered in an instant, with all its freshness and all its concurring circumstances, after a lapse of thirty or forty years. So it was with us. Our pride, which one would imagine would have been of so frail and evanescent a nature as to have been extinguished by the first brush of poverty, remained to us, adhered to us like a canker or a disease, when all our important distinctions had perished.

'I was brought up somewhat roughly, and was suffered to run about wild and idle enough until I attained my tenth year, when I was committed to the management of the village schoolmistress. With my satchel and well-thumbed primer, my pockets half full of marbles, and a couple of formidable slices of bread, (with butter or bacon between,) for my dinner, I used regularly every morning to take my way to the little school. What progress I attained there has escaped my memory; but I think that lessons in three syllables were the summit of my accomplishments. My father, who was dissatisfied at my progress, wished anxiously to remove me to a better school; and at last a legacy of £700 enabled him to put his ambitious schemes into execution. I was removed without loss of time to the "classical academy" of Mr. —, and after remaining there three or four years, was pronounced to

be "fit for anything." But then came the question — the serious and too often discussed question — What course should I like to follow? "What shall we make of you, John?" asked my father, with an inquisitive, exulting look. He had evidently visions of bishops, and judges, and generals, floating before his eyes. All the splendid accidents of fortune had been repeatedly the subject of conversation between us. The stories of men who had risen from a low beginning, from the most squalid servitude, from the poor-house and the prison, and afterwards realized the wealth of Cræsus, were familiar to us. We lived in a dream of riches. We surmounted obstacles; we overtook rivals in the race to power. No opposition deterred us. Fame, and profit, and power, were at the end of every prospect. The only question was, which was the best road to pursue? That problem, however, it was difficult to solve.

"Will you study politics? or law? or physic?" asked my father, with an earnest face, "or will you become a soldier or a sailor ——?" (He was stopped here by my mother, who pronounced a rapid negative on the two last professions;) — "or will you turn your mind to divinity ——?" — "I will not be a parson," returned I, at once. "And why?" was the question. "Because I do not want to be a curate, 'passing *poor* with forty pounds a-year.' I like to speculate and think, even to the limits of orthodoxy. I cannot raise myself to a living by flattery; and could I do so, I should fear to encounter the hate of every inhabitant of my parish, by stripping them yearly for my tithes. Let it be something else." — Thus it was that we

discussed the hours away. Sometimes a red-coat was most attractive to me ; sometimes a blue one. Then the carriage and ruffles of the physician caught my fancy ; and then the debates in Parliament, which the "County Chronicle" regularly pared down to suit its columns, inflamed my wishes, till I was absolutely bewildered by the number of the avenues to fame. At last, however, my father and I (my mother concurring) determined upon — the *Law* ! I remember the happy evening whereon this resolution was formed. My father was in high spirits. "We will drink a glass of wine, for once in a way, to the future Judge," said he. "I hope you will never hang anybody, John ?" said my mother ; if I thought so, I would call back my consent." "Never fear," replied my father ; "he will do what is right, I know. If his country should require such a painful act from him, he will not flinch from his duty." "I will never hang a man for forgery, however," exclaimed I, doggedly : "Blood for blood, is the old law, but nothing farther for me." "My dear John," interrupted my mother reprovingly, "do you not hear what your father says ? If your *duty* should require it, &c., &c." It will scarcely be believed that we could go on quarrelling respecting so remote a contingency. But so it was. I tried — I am almost ashamed to tell it — I tried on my father's wig that very evening, in order that I might see, before the matter was absolutely irrevokable, how a wig would become me, when I should be advanced to the bench ! How near I arrived to that point of ambition will be seen hereafter.

'The law being resolved upon, the only question that remained was, whether I should be sent to college, or

pass through the refining process of an attorney's office. We were in considerable perplexity on this point, when a friend of my father's happened to step in and determined the matter for us. He was a rough, eccentric man, but had withal his share of sense; and on the difficulty being stated to him, he replied with a loud, continuous whistle, that argued anything but an approval of our projects. "College!" he exclaimed, looking askant at me: "why he is half a fool already: if you send him to college you'll make him a fool complete." It must be owned in extenuation of the old man's rudeness, that my deportment at this time somewhat justified his suspicions. I had so long been dreaming after the fashion of Alnaschar, that I bore myself now and then towards my old acquaintance and equals in a way that not even the elevation I reckoned on could have justified. In truth, I had become a considerable coxcomb. I was not, I think, naturally vain; but my poor father's hopes and my mother's smiles and prophecies, brought out the germ of folly into sudden blossom. It was well for me that it was timely checked. Our friend's advice was taken. All notions of college were abandoned, and I was sent off, for five years, to the office of an attorney in our county town.

'The toil of an attorney's life is much exaggerated. It is held up as a sort of hideous spectrum to the imaginations of youth, and has deterred many an intelligent and diffident boy, and hundreds of doting mothers from adding a victim to the shrine of law. In the country, at least, there is little to do that need alarm an ordinary student. A brain of very common strength is sufficient to bear up against all the impediments that

usually beset this period of probation. Even the fictions of our jurisprudence (not the least vicious of its qualities) may be mastered, though not admired. Admiration demands a subtler scrutiny, a longer and closer intimacy with law, than a youth — nay than even I, a veteran of thirty years, have been able to contract with it. In truth, its first aspect is rugged and severe towards all. It was so with me, but habit reconciled me to my labors; and thus — with an occasional novel in the evening, and a walk with a rustic belle on Sunday, a short half-yearly visit to my parents, and a dance or two in the cold winter weather, — I managed to run through my five years of clerkship, with considerable satisfaction to myself, and not wholly without the approbation of my employers. At the expiration of that period I had the choice before me — whether to pursue the humbler but safer course of an attorney, or to venture upon the dangerous but dazzling chances of the bar. I preferred the latter; and, after a short sojourn at home, I was at once let loose upon — London!

‘The stride from the quiet of the country, from its sleepy, stagnant current of existence, to the soil and centre of intellectual, busy and ambitious life, is great and fearful. I think of it with a shudder even now. The sudden escape from all control is of itself perilous enough. But when, in addition to this, one is thrown amongst the struggling and vicious crowds of London, into her noisy streets and abandoned haunts (arenas more dangerous than even the bloody circuses of Rome, where the wild beast and the gladiator fought and mangled each other, for — what?) the wonder is, that

so many of the young and inexperienced survive to attain anything like a moral maturity.

‘I was told that I ought to see “the world;” and I was ready enough to behold it. “You should see everything once, at least,” said a new acquaintance: “take a glance at everything: sow your wild oats; and then sit down and fag steadily at law.” This was the advice of a man who was esteemed for his prudence, and not a little respected for his knowledge of “the town.” It was impossible to reject such counsel; and accordingly I resolved to see and judge of everything. What places this resolution led me into, it is unnecessary to detail. It is sufficient to say that the death of my father and mother about this time by an infectious fever, enabled me to see London to my heart’s content. I was the sole heir of their little property, which I speedily disposed of; not, however, before I had given an honest plumper at the county election to a candidate who was hard beset, and made my maiden speech at the hustings, which, it was said, turned the contest in his favor. A new member is always grateful; and my vote obtained for me a world of thanks, and a pressing invitation to his metropolitan residence.

‘I was now pursuing my way professedly to the bar. I had kept several terms, and had entered myself as pupil of a special pleader, at whose chambers I duly read the newspapers, peeled an orange, drank a glass of soda-water, and now and then (but this was a rare event) attempted to scrawl a declaration in trover or assumpsit, in which my bad writing and legal incapacity were the only things conspicuous. “You will never do for special pleading, nor the common

law bar," said one of my co-pupils; "you take the matter too leisurely. Suppose you were to try conveyancing? or see what figure you can make in a court of equity?" I caught at this suggestion. Six months of pleading had satisfied me that my "genius" lay another way. In other words, I heartily disliked my employment, and was glad to escape from it under any show or pretence. Mr. — had no objection, of course, to my quitting his office at the end of six, instead of twelve months, and leaving my desk open for another pupil; and accordingly I left him without ceremony, and transferred my person to the chambers of a celebrated conveyancer. This, from my country education, suited me better than my previous tasks. I had some glimmering notion of the law of real property, and I was not unwilling to increase my knowledge. The rapid diminution of my funds, too, began to make me think; and after a few struggles with Fearne and Preston, Sugden and Sanders, a few sighs cast towards the distant theatres, and a month of severe but wholesome illness, I cast off the trammels of idleness, and sat down to work in earnest.

'I had not been here more than a quarter of a year, when I one day suddenly met in the street Sir Charles L——, our county member. He had not forgotten my election services, and hastened to reproach me for not having called upon him. I pleaded the usual number of excuses—protested that he was "very kind"—that he "overrated my trifling exertions," &c.—and concluded by accepting his invitation to dinner for the following Saturday. The interval was spent in ordering a new and fashionable dress, and in

getting up, for conversation, some of the ordinary topics for discourse — the last poem or novel ; but when the hour arrived, and I entered the member's spacious mansion, and heard my name go sounding up the marble staircase, I forgot all my late conversational acquisitions, my new dress, and even the applause that followed my last speech at the club, and stumbled into the drawing-room with a dizzy head and almost trembling steps. The reception which Sir Charles gave me, however, speedily reassured me. He was a well-bred, polite man, and, it may be, was a little pleased at the homage which I thus involuntarily paid to his station. He introduced me to his wife ; to his son (an only child, whom Nature seemed to have constructed for the sole purpose of hanging one of Stultz's or Weston's suits upon) ; and finally to a poor relation of the family, whom the death of both parents, and her own utter indigence, had cast upon the member's charity. Mary S—— was, when I first knew her, about nineteen years of age. I remember her as though it were but yesterday. She had not that beauty without fault, either in face or figure, nor that romantic melancholy expression, which novelists delight to expatiate on ; but she had a pleasing and intelligent countenance, a little dashed by sorrow, but not injured — an unaffected manner — and a voice more musical than any sound I have ever heard. It was to *me*

“ More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear ; ”

'twas sweeter than “ the sweet South ; ” richer than Juliet's voice ; softer than Ariel's song ; and — I was never weary of listening to it !

‘ Being both persons of small importance (for I was no longer a freeholder of ——shire,) Mary and I were generally left together to amuse ourselves whenever I visited Sir Charles’s house. I had a general invitation there, for which I was, I believe, partly indebted to some musical talent that I possessed, but which I should have neglected, had not “attractive metal” drawn me thither with a power that I could not resist. That being the case, I became a visitor, sometimes at the evening parties of Lady L——, and always in the mornings; for then the masters of the mansion were usually absent, and their *protégée* was left to the solitude of her thoughts. The consequences of this intimacy may easily be foreseen. I fell in love with the excellent Mary, who returned my affection, but at the same time resolutely refused to accept my hand, and entail poverty on us both. I proposed to ask the consent of Sir Charles. She dissuaded me, however, from this; assuring me that he would reject me, — professedly upon some plea of family pride, but in reality to save himself from the necessity of aiding our slender means, as well as to preserve for his wife a cheap and useful companion. For the condition of Mary was not that of a sinecurist. She was the chief secretary of the house; the writer of all Lady L——’s letters; the copyist, and often the corrector, of Sir Charles’s speeches; the milliner and dress-maker of her lady cousin, sometimes on ordinary, and always on extraordinary occasions. She filled, in short, one of those thankless, nameless offices, where the ties of blood are admitted solely for a sordid purpose—where the victim has to endure, uncomplainingly, (or starve!)

all that the proud will sometimes dare to inflict—where all the labors and hardships of servitude are undergone, without even the wages of a menial. In these cases, there is but too often no mercy on the one hand, and no spirit of resistance on the other. The first act of reluctant charity justifies every species of after-tyranny. The value of the original benevolence is exacted to the uttermost farthing — no abatement, no relenting. “Do you remember *who it was* that took you in ? and fed you ? and, &c.” —

“ Oh ! hither let soft Charity repair ! ”

Let her repair to such melancholy places, and soften the ungenerous heart, and sweeten, with her smiles, the bitter, bitter bread of dependence !

‘ We married. The consent of Mary’s “ protectors ” had been asked, and immediately refused ; and upon this, I tried repeatedly to induce her to fly with me, but in vain. At last our situation made us desperate, and some prospect of professional success opening at the time, I wrung from her a slow consent to — elope. We fled, and were, as may be imagined, never pursued. The consequences of this step, however, were, that my wife was cast off, and I discountenanced. But I nevertheless plodded steadily on my way ; never relaxing, never forgetting that on my success depended the comforts, nay the existence, of one who was dearer to me than myself. By the time I had arrived at the bar, and was qualified to practise “ in court,” we had one child born to us — a girl. It was the only one we ever had, and we loved it in proportion. No one can tell how entire and unselfish our love was. Men may

imagine and speculate on other things ; but *this* is beyond all guess, all divining. It is, beyond comparison, the most painful, the most powerful, and mysterious sympathy that ever warmed the human heart. Let no one talk of it, who has not *felt* the care and anxiety which beset a parent's mind : —

“ He talks to me who — *never had a child.*”

(How wise is Shakspeare in this, as in all other things !)
The single man knows no more of what we endure for the child we love, than the blind or deaf know of sound or color : his idea is a guess altogether, unfounded or remote from reality.

‘ I forgot how long it was that we continued under the ban of Sir Charles and Lady L——’s displeasure ; but I recollect that the interdiction was taken off at the request of a good-natured visitor of their house, to whom I had once (for I used to carve occasionally there) accidentally given the prime slice from a haunch of venison. He recollected this with gratitude, and was not easy till we were restored to favor. After some discussion, some show of resentment, and an intimation that we were to “ expect nothing,” except the countenance of the family, Lady L—— signified that she should “ no longer object to receive Mr. and Mrs. ——.” Her willingness to be reconciled was communicated to us ; and we once more walked up the marble staircase of the L——’s, heard our names thundered out by powdered lacqueys, and once more underwent

“ The proud man’s contumely,”

and all the ungracious and worthless favors which the

poor but too frequently submit to receive from "the great." It would be of little use to recount, one after one, the numberless slights and stinging condescensions which were showered upon our bare "unsheltered heads." I myself would have fled into the forest, or the poor-house, to avoid them : but we had — a child ! and for her dear and tender sake, my poor Mary entreated that I would bear up against ill fortune a little longer.

'Accordingly, a "little longer," and "a little longer," we went on ; our situation never amending. Custom, which reconciles us to all other things, never renders caprice or tyranny the less difficult to be borne. We endured, more than shall be told, and we felt that we were descending, with swift and certain steps, from one stage of discomfort to another, and with the prospect of inevitable poverty full in our view. First, trifling delicacies were abandoned, then the finer clothing common to our condition ; then the solid comforts of life, meat, tea, firing, &c. passed out of our reach. Our child suffered last : for we were daily guilty of little pious frauds towards her, to conceal from her the absolute poverty of our lot.

'During all this period, I was the visitor (on no intimate footing, however, for I could not return the substantial civilities offered me) at gentlemen's tables. I dined off plate and china, spread with all the delicacies of the seasons, when I had not a meal at home. On these occasions, I have been compelled to restrain myself (to an extent that it would be difficult to credit), in order to conceal from the persons present the voracious hunger that was devouring me. I have abstracted

food (from the share, however, allotted to myself) — bread, cake, or other substantial edibles — to carry home for the next day's sustenance. In the course of time, this foraging was calculated upon between us; and my wife would see me depart almost with pleasure upon one of these expeditions, knowing that I should reserve for our domestic necessities a portion of the superfluities of which I was expected to partake. I have heard of a wealthy miser doing this to a great extent. We, however, had a better excuse than he. He abstracted what belonged to others; whereas I pilfered only from myself.

‘But I am writing confusedly, and without order. I should have mentioned that my funds were, for some time, sufficient to furnish us with common comforts, and even to appear suitably to our station. Our honeymoon did not wane and disappear so very rapidly in the chill atmosphere of poverty, as to call for that commiseration which a sudden accident alone excites. We were exposed in the end, indeed, to the rigorous seasons. We had our fill of calamity. But it descended upon us, drop after drop, like the icy dew that falls “upon the earth beneath.” We retired from our places gradually, and left our acquaintances an opportunity (and perhaps an excuse), for discovering and attaching themselves to other friends. The common intercourse and advantages of the world are not to be had for nothing: we must pay for them with other things. We must return favors for benefits, good humor for vivacity, nay, almost meal for meal; otherwise, we shrink out of the circle of society and our place is supplied by fresh comers. We were

willing to do all that could be done in this interchange, but we found that money failed us at last, and with money good spirits also vanished: we were, therefore, fairly dismissed. I made, indeed, a few efforts to recover myself. A sudden influx of business gave a temporary color to our fate, but it did not last long enough, nor was it of sufficient amount, to give to our prosperity even the appearance of stability. We fell

“ In many an airy wheel,”

deeper and deeper still, till we touched the lowest level of our destiny.

‘ But let me return, for a short space, to our child. We had, as I have said, one child — one only. To give her the appearance of respectability, to afford her the wholesome, and sometimes delicate food, which her youth and infirm health required, was the struggle of every day. We ourselves fared hardly, and were content. My own expenses were trivial: those of my wife were less. But even rent and the coarsest clothing are fearful things for those whose income is utterly precarious. Sometimes we had nothing — not a shilling, not a solitary farthing; and then we were driven to borrow trifling sums by depositing the few poor trinkets of my wife, some books that were seldom in use, or a portion of our clothes, with the pawnbroker. These sometimes remained unredeemed for months. At such times our distresses have been great indeed. I have sought and petitioned for employment of *any* sort, and my wife has shed tears of joy at having the commonest labor offered to her. *It produced BREAD!* I should cause the visages of some of my bar acquaintance to

grow doubly supercilious were I to enumerate the shifts and projects that I have been reduced to, to obtain a shilling or two for the next morning's meal. But what will not the father and the husband do! It may be well enough for the single man to go to his bed and sleep, careless of the next day's fortune; but he who has creatures whom he loves dependent on him, must be busy, and anxious, and provident. I have (thank God) never yet lain down at night without knowing that my wife and child would the next morning have bread before them—sometimes, indeed, scanty fare, but always something. What have I undergone, more than once, to procure this, shall remain locked in my own heart. I have never provoked the generosity of my professional brethren, nor the contempt or compassion of strangers by an open exposure of my wants: for I had a character and station to preserve by day, on which all the hope that was left depended. But *secretly*, and by night, and where I was *unknown*, I have shrunk from nothing. The labor of the porter, the hack writer's midnight toil, the work of the common copyist, BEGGARY, have all been familiar to me. I look back on these occupations without shame or regret, and, indeed, at times, when my pulse of pride beats—as it will beat feebly even now—I recur to some of them with a smile.

‘In our sunny seasons we had one apparent luxury—music. It was in truth a great enjoyment; although the real object of its introduction among us (to whom luxury of any sort was necessarily a stranger) was that our child, who inherited her mother's sweet voice, should find it a means of livelihood. When we grew

much poorer than usual, our little borrowed piano-forte was dismissed ; but, in other times we struggled hard to keep it for our daughter's sake. I remember still our evening concerts, my flute or voice accompanying her instrument, and our sole dear auditor standing beside us with glistening eyes. We almost forgot our poverty, and turned aside from the dark face of futurity, to listen to gentle airs and solemn movements. We wandered with Handel, "by hedgerow elms on hillocks green," — with Kent, and Boyce, and Purcell. Haydn and Beethoven were our friends ; the learning of Sebastian Bach was familiar to us ; the divine melodies of Mozart were our perpetual delight.

' Music, however, could afford no help, farther than to enable us occasionally to forget misfortune. It did not purchase for us bread or meat, nor revive my coat of rustic black, which the malice of several winters and of as many summers had conspired to injure. My wife's clothes faded, while she hearkened to harmonies that were ever fresh. In a word our miserable wardrobe became so flagrantly bare, that our "friends" at L—— house announced the fact to us in unmitigated terms, and desired that, unless it could be renewed, we might straight become better strangers. "We will leave them, my dear Mary," said I, "to their poor pride. They are lower than we are, after all." She sighed and made no answer ; for she saw, notwithstanding all her humility, that we could never return there again. We never did return !

' One of the most painful and irksome things to myself was the necessity of appearing "in Court" during the period of our extreme poverty. It is supposed

necessary, with what reason I know not, that the barristers should appear in Court at all events, whether allured there by business or not. In compliance with this custom I have sate out many a weary morning, with my blue bag before me, (its sole ballast a quire or two of paper, or an old volume of reports,) sometimes listening to arguments on matters of no interest, but generally meditating on my own mournful prospects, and forming hundreds of projects to retrieve our fallen fortunes. How little have the frequenters of the Court of Chancery imagined that, under the imposing though grotesque dress of "the bar," one man has sat there as poor and friendless as I have been. There is a sort of equality in the costume and in the rank which rejects the idea of any great diversity of condition. Yet have I sate there more than once, utterly pennyless, whilst Mr. Romilly or Mr. Bell, Mr. Hart or Mr. Leach, &c. have been "winning *golden* opinions from all sorts of men." At these times I have sometimes thought that, had I fair opportunities, I might have taken my stand by the side of those celebrated advocates; but, alas! when some casual opportunity came, I found that I was tongue-tied, and that all the faculties that I gave myself credit for were either not there, or were in a moment dispersed and put to flight. Self-possession, confidence in one's own strength, is scarcely a secondary requisite at the bar. The learning and even ingenuity of man are nothing without it. The course of the advocate should ever be

"As confident as is the falcon's flight,"

if he hopes to conquer. For myself, I never could

attain this self-possession. I have dreamed, indeed, of Bacon and Coke, and Hardwicke and Holt, and Thurlow and Mansfield, ("silver-tongued Murray,") and all who have made a name, and I have vowed that I too *would* win the same airy and substantial glory that had encircled the heads of famous lawyers. I have read, and read, and written, early and late, morning, noon, and night; I have compiled and digested, speculated and invented. All branches of law, all sorts of literature have I tried: but my writings accumulated, my information increased—in vain! My labors were fruitless. My piles of manuscripts were destined only to feed the worm or the moth, or to afford a habitation to the spider.

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'I know not why I should pursue farther this downward path. It would be easy to go on recounting fact after fact, feeling after feeling,

"Facilis descensus Averni."

'But, having thus far traced the narrative of my calamities, I am content to stop. If any one should ever read over what is written, he will probably find it even now sufficiently irksome. There is too little of incident or adventure to stir up the blood, to make "the hair to stand on end," to force from the eyes of readers deluges of tears. Mine, is not an "eventful history." It is a melancholy one; and, I fear too, that it is not a solitary instance of misplaced ambition. But it is dull, and dark, and uniform. It is without a spot of pleasantness: sterile in all its aspects, unless, indeed, it prove (and it may well prove) a timely and

valuable warning for those who have yet the race of life to run. That it may be useful in this sort, I will complete it. I will not, by publishing it now, encounter the jeers or the sympathy of critics; but I will leave it for the edification of those who come after me. It will be of little moment *then* what becomes of my poor memoirs. Wit, rancor, praise, compassion, — what will they avail to the ear that is deaf? to the eye that is blind? to the sense — the intellect that has soared, or sunk, or fled — whither?

‘... A few more sentences, and I have done. They comprehend, notwithstanding all I have already said, the bitter sum of my existence. But I cannot linger over them. I cannot, like the beggar by the way-side, exhibit and grow garrulous over my holier sorrows. Let it be sufficient to say that I have followed my wife and my only child to their graves, and that I am now utterly — *alone*! My misery needs no exaggeration, and it asks for no sympathy. I go on, as I have always done, struggling and toiling to-day for the food of to-morrow. But I no longer feel apprehensive of the future. It is even some alleviation when my own insignificant personal wants obtrude upon me, and call me away for a moment from substantial grief. It was with this view, with this hope, that I sate down to pen this story of my disappointments; and, in truth, the task has now and then beguiled me — not into forgetfulness, indeed — but it has mingled with the almost intolerable pain of the present, recollections of the comparatively trivial sorrows of the past. I have all my life been pursuing a phantom — professional success. I have been

“chasing the rainbow” for fifty years. I have failed in every undertaking. I have striven my best! have been honest, industrious, and constant to my calling, yet nothing has prospered with me. I do not seek to inquire into the reasons for all this; but it may be worth the while of another person to do so. The causes of success in life deserve a minute scrutiny. Whether they be owing to accident, to impudence, to genius, to perseverance, it will be well to know. It will then be seen why my learning has been useless, my honesty of no account, my daily, nightly, unceasing toil unavailing. Let me not be understood as being *now* querulous or indignant. The time for those feelings has passed away. I have no motives now to desire rank or professional success. I would not possess them if I could.’

Such is the counsellor’s story. I have nothing to add to it, except that we heard he had thriven in his business somewhat better latterly. His health, however, (his clerk said,) became very indifferent; he did not attend Court so regularly as usual, and never walked out as formerly, except to visit a little churchyard in the suburbs of London, where his wife and child lay buried. To this place he went regularly every Saturday evening, about sunset, and sometimes, when his spirits were more than usually depressed, he would wander there every afternoon for a week or a fortnight successively.

1833.

THE MAN-HUNTER.

It can scarcely be more than eighteen months ago, that two Englishmen met together unexpectedly at the little town or city of Dessau. The elder was a grave person, in no way remarkable ; but the younger forced observation upon him. He was a tall, gaunt, bony figure, presenting the relics of a formidable man, but seemingly worn with travel and oppressed by weighty thoughts. He must once have been handsome ; and he was even now imposing. But poverty and toil are sad enemies to human beauty ; and he had endured both. Nevertheless the black and ragged elf-locks which fell about his face could not quite conceal its noble proportions ; and, although his cheek was ghastly and macerated, (perhaps by famine,) there was a wild, deep-seated splendor glowing in his eye, such as we are apt to ascribe to the poet when his frenzy is full upon him, or to the madman when he dreams of vengeance.

The usual salutations of friends passed between them, and they conversed for a short time on indifferent subjects ; the elder, as he spoke, scrutinizing the condition of his acquaintance, and the other glancing

about from time to time, with restless, watchful eyes, as though he feared some one might escape his observation, or else might detect himself. The name of the elder of these men was Denbigh : that of the younger has not reached me. We will call him Gordon. It was the curiosity of the first-mentioned that, after a reasonable period, broke out into inquiry. (They were just entering the public room of the Black Eagle at Dessau.)

‘ But what has brought you here ? ’ said he. ‘ I left you plodding at a merchant’s desk, with barely the means of living. Though a friend, you would never let me please myself by lending you money ; nor would you be my companion down the Rhine, some three years ago. You professed to hate travelling. Yet I find you here — a traveller evidently, with few comforts. Come, be plain with me. Tell me — what has brought you hither ? Or rather what has withered and wasted you, and made your hair so grey ? You are grown quite an old man.’

‘ Ay,’ replied Gordon ; ‘ I am old, as you say, old enough. Winter is upon me, on my head, on my heart ; both are frozen up. Do you wish to know what brought me here ? Well, you have a right to know ; and you shall be told. You shall hear — a tale.’

‘ A true one ? ’ inquired Denbigh, smilingly.

‘ True ! ’ echoed the other ; ‘ ay, as true as hell, as dark, as damnable — but peace, peace ! ’ said he, checking himself for a moment, and then proceeding in a hoarse, whispering, vehement voice — ‘ all that in time. We must begin quietly — quietly. Come, let

us drink some wine, and you shall see presently what a calm historian I am.'

Wine, together with some more solid refreshments, were accordingly ordered. Gordon did not taste the latter, but swallowed a draught or two of the bold liquid, which seemed to still his nerves like an opiate. He composed himself, and indeed appeared disposed to forget that there was such a thing as trouble in the world, until the impatience of his friend (which vented itself in the shape of various leading questions) induced him to summon up his recollections. He compressed his lips together for a moment, and drew a short, deep breath, through his inflated nostrils; but otherwise there was no preface or introduction to his story, which commenced nearly, if not precisely, in the following words:—

'About three years ago, a young girl was brought to one of those charitable institutions in the neighborhood of London, where the wretched (the sinful and the destitute) find refuge and consolation. She was, you may believe me, beautiful; *so* beautiful, so delicate, and, as I have said, so young, that she extorted a burst of pity and admiration from people long inured to look upon calamity.

'She was attended by her mother—a widow. This woman differed from her child; not merely in age or feature. She was, in comparison, masculine; her face was stern; her frame strong and enduring; she looked as though hunger and shame had been busy with her—as though she had survived the loss of all things, and passed the extreme limits of human woe. Once—for I knew her—she would have disdained to

ask even for pity. Oh ! what she must have borne, in body, in mind, before she could have brought herself to become a suppliant there ! Yet there she was — she, and her youngest born in her hand, beggars. She presented her child to the patronesses of the institution ; and, with an unbroken voice, prayed them to take her in for refuge.

‘ The common questions were asked, the who, the whence, the wherefore, &c. Even something more than common curiosity displayed itself in the inquiries, and all was answered with an unflinching spirit. The mother’s story was sad enough. Let us hope that such things are rare in England. She was the widow of a military man, an officer of courage and conduct, who died in battle. If we could live upon laurels, his family need not have starved. But the laurel is a poisonous tree. It is gay and shining, and undecaying ; but whoso tasteth it, dies ! No matter now. The widow and three children were left almost without money. The father had indeed possessed some little property ; but it consisted of bonds, or notes, or securities of a transferable nature ; and was intrusted (without receipt or acknowledgment) to — a villain. The depositary used it for his own purposes ; denied his trust ; and, with the coldness of a modern philosopher, saw his victims thrust out of doors, to starve ! A good Samaritan gave them bread and employment for a few weeks ; but he died suddenly, and they were again at the mercy of fortune.

‘ It was now that the mother felt that her children looked up to her for life. And she answered the appeal as a mother only can. She toiled to the very utmost

of her strength : nothing was too much, nothing too base or menial for her. She worked, and watched, and endured all things, from all persons ; and thus it was that she obtained coarse food for her young ones — sometimes even enough to satisfy their hunger ; till at last the eldest boy became useful, and began to earn money also ; and *then* they were able almost daily to taste — bread ! It is a wonder how they lived — how they shunned the vices and squalid evils which beset the poor. But they *did* so. They withstood all temptations. They felt no envy nor hatred for the great and fortunate. The sordid errors of their station never fastened on them. They grew up honest, liberal-minded, courageous. They wanted not even for learning, or at least knowledge. For, after a time, a few cheap books were bought or borrowed, and the ambition which the mother taught them to feel, served the boys in place of instructors. They read and studied. After working all day, (running on errands, hewing wood, and drawing water,) these children of a noble mother sat down to gather learning ; never disobeying, never murmuring to do what she, to whom they owed all things, commanded them to achieve. Yet, little merit is due to *them*. It was *she*, the incomparable mother, who did all ; saved, supported, endured all for her children's sake, for her dead husband's sake, and for the disinterested love of virtue !

‘ I know not what frightful crimes some progenitor might have committed, what curse he might have brought upon this race ; but, if *none*, in the name of God's mercy, why, (when they had been steeped in baseness and poverty to the lips,) *why* was a curse

more horrible than all to come upon them? Poor creatures! had they not endured enough? What is the axe or the gibbet to the daily never-dying pain which a mother feels who sees her children famishing away before her? Sickness, cold, hunger, the contempt of friends, the hate or indifference of all the world besides, the perpetual heart-breaking toil and struggle to live! to get bread, yet often want it! Was not all enough? I suppose not; for a curse greater than all fell upon them.

‘A friend — ha, ha, ha! — let me use common words — a friend of the elder son, (who had, by degrees, risen to be a manufacturer’s clerk,) visited them at their humble abode. He was rich, he was, moreover, a specious youth, fair and florid — such as young girls fancy; but as utterly hard and impenetrable to every touch of honor or pity, as the stone we tread upon. He — I must make short work of this part of my story — he loved the young sister of his friend, or rather he sought her with the brutal appetite of an animal. He talked, and smiled, and flattered her — (she was a weak thing, and his mummery pleased her): he brought presents to her mother, and, at last ruin and shame upon herself. She was *so* young — not fifteen years of age! But this base and hellish slave had no mercy on her innocent youth, no respect for her desolate condition. He ruined her — oh! there were horrid circumstances — force, and fraud, and cruelty of all kinds, that I will not touch upon. It is sufficient to say that her destruction was achieved, and all her family in his power. The child, (herself now about to be a mother,) meditated death. She was timid, however, and shrank from

the vague and gloomy terrors of the grave. So she lived on, pale and humbled, uttering no complaint, and disclosing no disgrace, until her mother noticed her despondency, and reproached her for it. With a trembling heart — trembling at she knew not what — she inquired solemnly the cause of all this woe. The girl could not stand those piercing looks. The mother whom she had obeyed, not only with love but in fear also, commanded a disclosure, and the poor victim sunk on her knees before her. She told her sad story with sobs and streaming eyes, and with her figure abased to absolute prostration. Her parent listened (she would rather have listened to her own death-warrant) — looked ghastly at her for a minute, and reproached her no more ! Some accident — some intermission of employment, (I forget what,) made it impossible to support the poor fallen child with proper care. This inability it was, joined to a wish to keep her shame secret, that carried the mother and daughter to the charitable place of which I have spoken. And there the child was deposited, under a feigned name, to undergo the pangs of child-birth.

‘ But the sons ! Do you not ask, where are *they* ? Ha, ha ! I am coming to that. They knew nothing — suspected nothing, till all the mother’s plans were effected ; and then with a gloomy countenance, and a voice troubled to its depths with many griefs, she told them — ALL.’

‘ How did they bear it ? What did they say or do ? ’ inquired Denbigh, breaking silence for the first time since the commencement of the story. Gordon answered : —

‘Her communication was, at first, absolutely unintelligible. It was so sudden, and so utterly unsuspected, that it bore the character of a dream or a fable. They stood bewildered. But when the truth — the real, bad, terrible truth became plain — when it was repeated with more particulars, and made frightfully distinct, — the eldest son burst into a rage of words. The younger, a youth of more concentrated passions, started up, opened his mouth as though he would utter some curse; but instantly fell dead on the floor.’

‘Good G—d!’ interrupted Denbigh again, ‘and did he die?’

‘No,’ replied the other, ‘he but appeared to die. Did I say “dead?” No; I was wrong. He was not irrecoverably dead. By prompt help he was revived. In the struggle between life and death, blood burst from his mouth and from his nose, and he felt easier. Perhaps the oath which he, at that moment, was prescribing to himself — the fierce, implacable, unalterable determination which his soul was forming, tranquillized his spirit; for he awoke to apparent calmness, and expressed himself resigned. But he was not so to be satisfied. Patience — resignation — forgiveness — these are good words: they are virtues, perhaps; but they were not *his*. He was of a fiery spirit —’

‘Like yourself,’ said Denbigh, trying to smile away the painful impression which the story was producing on his mind.

‘Aye, like myself, Sir,’ was the fierce answer. ‘He thought that vengeance, where punishment was manifestly due, was scarcely the shadow of a crime; and *I* think so too. He swore, silently, but solemnly,

(and invoked all Heaven and Hell to attest his oath,) that he would thenceforward have but one object, one ambition; and this was — REVENGE! He swore to take the blood of the betrayer, and — *he did.*'

'When? where?' asked Denbigh, quickly.

'Let us take some wine,' said Gordon; 'I am speaking now,' continued he, after he had drunk, 'of what *must* be. The future is not yet come. But as sure as I see you before me, so surely do I see the consummation of this revenge. There is a fate in some things: there is one in this. Do you remember the story of the Spaniard Aguirra?'

'No!' answered the other.

'Yet, it is well known — it is true — it is memorable, and it deserves to be remembered; for (except in the one instance of which I now speak) it stands alone in the catalogue of extraordinary events. You shall hear it presently, if it be only to rescue, by a parallel case, my story from the character of a fiction. At present, let it suffice to say, that sure as was Aguirra's vengeance, so sure shall be — MINE!'

'Yours!' exclaimed Denbigh, 'do I hear aright!'

'Aye, open your ears wide. I am *the Revenger!* *My* family it is who owe Fortune so little — to whom vengeance owes so much! *My* mother and her famished brood it was of whose sufferings, I have spoken, and whose injuries I am destined to revenge.'


'But the villain — ?' inquired Denbigh.

'You do well to bring me back to him. You think not that I for a moment forget him. He fled when he knew — nay, *before* he knew — when he but *surmised* that we had discovered his villany. He collected



money together, and left his country. But I was soon upon his track. I too had gathered some hard earnings, and my brother more; and with these united, I commenced a desperate pursuit. I will not weary you by recounting the many difficulties of my task; how many thousand miles I have journeyed barefoot, with little clothing, with less food, (for I was forced to economize my poor means;) how for three years I have been generally a beggar for my bread, a companion with the unsheltered dog; how I have been wounded, robbed, and even once imprisoned. *That* fortunately was but for a day, or it might have overthrown my plans of vengeance. Thanks to the furies, it did not; I followed him—over all countries, from Moscow to Madrid, from the Baltic to the Carpathians. He fled with a sense, with a knowledge that I was *for ever* on his track. He slept trebly armed, locked in and barred from all access. He has been known to rise at night, and take flight for a distant land. But, with the unerring sense of a bloodhound, I was always after him. I was sure of him. He never escaped me. No disguise, no swiftness of journeying, no digressions from the ordinary path, no doubles, nor turnings, nor common feints, such as the hunted beast resorts to in his despair, availed *him*. Wherever he was — *there was I!* not so soon perhaps, but quite as surely.

‘Twenty times I have been near meeting him alone, and consummating my purpose. But one thing or other perpetually intervened. A casual blow, without the certainty of its being fatal, would have been nothing. *He* might have recovered.—he might have lived to



see me proclaimed a malefactor, and have borne evidence against me ; and then *he* would have triumphed, and not I. I resolved to make surer work ; to *see* that he should die ; and for myself, I determined to live, for some time at least, in order to enjoy the remembrance of having accomplished one deed of justice.

‘ I said that I would not weary you with a narrative of my travels and a repetition of my failures. But one adventure amongst many, occurs to me, somewhat differing from the rest, and you shall hear it. One of my transits was across the whole face of Europe ; from an obscure town in Flanders to the Porte. I had scarcely reached the Fanar, (where I was housed by a Greek, whom I had served in an accidental affray,) when I fell sick of a fiery distemper — some plague or fever begot in those burning regions, which sometimes destroys the native and almost always the luckless stranger. In my extremity, my kind hosts sent for a physician — a converted Jew. He came and heard my ravings, and let the sickness deal with me as it chose. Some words, however, which I threw out in my delirium (at his second visit) excited his curiosity ; and coming, as they did, from a Frank, he was induced to communicate them to an Englishman who lodged in his house. This Englishman was — *the fiend*, the fugitive, whom I had chased so long in vain. A few words and a lump of gold concluded a bargain ; and the next time the scowling Issachar came to my bedside, he ordered a cup of coffee for his patient. I had at that time recovered my senses, and became suddenly and sensitively awake to every thing about

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me. I saw the renegade take a powder from his vest ; and, after looking round to see that all was clear, put it, with a peculiar look, into the cup. "*It is poison,*" I said to myself ; and by a sudden effort (while the Israelite's back was turned,) I forced myself upwards, and sate, like a corpse revived, awaiting his attention. After he had drugged the draught, he turned round suddenly and beheld me. There I was, unable to speak indeed, but ghastly and as white as stone, threatening and grinning, and chattering unintelligible sounds. He was staggered ; but recovering himself with a smile, he tendered the detestable potion. I had just strength enough to dash it out of his hand, and sank on the bed exhausted. When I recovered I found myself alone ; nor did I ever again see my physician.

'I do not complain of this. Life for life is an equal stake. I knew the game which I was playing. Death for one or both of us — that was certain. Quiet for him, at all events, (upon the earth or within it) ; perhaps revenge for me. I was not angry at this attempt on my life. I liked it better, in truth, than hunting day after day, week after week, a flying, timorous, unresisting wretch. The opposition — the determination he evinced to strike again spurred me on. It afforded a relief to my perpetual disappointment : it chequered the miserable monotony of my life. Sometimes I had almost felt compassion for my harassed and terrified enemy, and generally contempt. But *now* — an adder was before me. It rose up, and strove to use its fangs, and was no longer to be trod on without peril. These *thoughts*, strange as it may seem, contributed to my

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recovery. I grew tranquil and well apace; and when I was fit to travel, I found that my foe had quitted precipitately the banks of the Bosphorus.

‘I had little difficulty in learning his route; for my Greek had his national subtilty, and did not spare money to set me on the track. The Jew doctor (he had a second bribe) said that he had overheard my victim bargaining with a Tartar courier to conduct him to Vienna. Upon this hint, I set off on my dreary journey through the Ottoman empire and its huge provinces — Roumelia, Wallachia, Transylvania. I traversed the great uncultivated plains of Turkey; I crossed the Balkan and the muddy Danube; escaped the quarantine of the Crapaks; and finally dismounted at Vienna, just as a carriage was heard thundering along the Presburg road, containing a traveller to whom haste was evidently of the last importance. ’Twas HE! I saw him; and he saw *me*. He saw me and knew in a moment that all his toilsome journey was once more in vain. I saw him grow pale before me, and I triumphed. Ha! ha! — that night I was joyful. I ate, and drank, and dreamt, as though I had no care or injury upon me. The next morning I looked to see that my dagger was sharp, and my pistols primed, and set out on foot to decoy my foe into a quiet place, fit for the completion of my purpose. But I failed, as I had failed often before. I beset him, I tried to surprise him; I kept him in incessant alarm; but the end was still the same. He was still destined to escape me, and I to remain his pursuer.

‘How it was that he retained his senses, that he had still spring of mind to fly, and hope to escape pursuit, is a mystery to me. I have often wondered that he

did not bare his throat before me, and end his misery ; as those who grow dizzy on a precipice, cast themselves from it, and find refuge from their intolerable fears — in death. But no ; his love of life, his fear (caused by that love of life) were so great, so insuperable, that they never seemed capable, as in ordinary cases, of sinking into indifference or despair. He had no moral, no intellectual qualities ; no courage of any sort. Yet by his *fear* alone, he became at times absolutely terrific. His struggles, his holding on to life, (when nothing was left worth living for,) his sleepless, ceaseless activity in flight assumed a serious, and even awful character. He pursued *his purpose* as steadily and as unflinchingly as I pursued mine. Terror never stopped him ; hope never forsook him. From one end of the world to the other he fled — backwards and forwards, this way and that — he fled, and fled ; not dropping from apprehension, like the dove or the wren ; but still keeping on his way like some fierce bird of prey, who, driven from one region, will still seek another, and another, and fight it out to the last extremity. So frightful have been his struggles, so wild and fantastic the character of his fears, that once or twice, I — (his destroyer) — I, who was watching him with an ever-deadly purpose, became absolutely daunted and oppressed. I resumed my strength, however, speedily, as you will suppose ; for what his fear was to him, hate or revenge was to me — the sole stirring principle of life. Oh ! this accursed wretch ! does he ever dream that I relax ? — that toil, and destitution, and danger, have any effect upon *me* ? He shall live to find himself in error. I *am* the fate — the blood-hound that *will* follow, and

must find him at last. Let him give up the contest at once, and all will be quiet — no more fear for him — no more sad labors for me ! Of what value is life to either of us ? But yes — to *me*, it is of value ; for I have a deed to do, an act of justice to perform on the most reckless and heartless villain that ever disgraced the human name.'

'And *his* name, what is that ?' asked Denbigh.

'Warne — Warne — the brand of hell be on him !'

'Hush ! do not speak so loud ! Look ! there is some one in yonder box who has heard you,' said Denbigh again, in a suppressed tone.

'I care not,' replied the other. 'This devil who walks in human shape, and under the name of Warne, is now in this city. He has eluded me for a short — a very short time — by shifting his course and changing his disguises. But I am here, and shall find him, wherever he lurks. Be sure of it.'

At this moment a stranger was seen stealing from a box, where he had been taking refreshment. He appeared by his walk (for the two speakers saw only his back) to be an old man. He said nothing ; but, walking up towards the end of the room, where a person attached to the inn was standing, put a piece of money in his hand, (evidently more than sufficient to discharge his bill,) and left the house.

From the first movement of the stranger, the attention of Gordon was upon him — his neck was stretched out, his eyes strained and wide open ; he even seemed to listen to his tread.

'What is the matter ?' said Denbigh. 'There is nothing but an old man there, who is tottering home to bed.'

Gordon made no reply, but followed the person alluded to stealthily from the house. After a minute's space, Denbigh saw him again hiding behind the buttress of a building on the opposite side of the street. He was evidently watching the stranger. He did not continue long, however, in this situation; but stole forwards cautiously. After proceeding a short distance he turned, and followed the windings of a street or road that intersected the principal street of the town, and finally disappeared!

Denbigh never saw him again. Three or four days afterwards, the body of an unknown man was found in a copse near the city of Dessau. It was pierced with wounds, and disfigured; and the clothes were much torn, as in a struggle. From one hand (which remained clasped) some fragments of dress, coarser than what belonged to the body, were forced with difficulty; but they did not lead to detection. The stranger was buried, and as much inquiry made respecting him as is usual for persons for whom no one feels an interest. His murderer never was discovered. Denbigh left the place immediately that the inquisition was over. He did not volunteer his evidence upon the occasion. His natural love of justice, and perceptions of right, were perhaps obscured by his affection for his friend; besides which, nothing that he could have said upon the occasion would have exceeded a vague suspicion of the fact. At all events, he kept Gordon's secret, until he deemed that it was not dangerous to disclose it.

In regard to Gordon himself—he was never more heard of. A man, indeed, bearing somewhat of his

appearance, was afterwards seen in the newly cleared country near the Ohio ; but, excepting the resemblance that he bore to Denbigh's friend, and a certain intelligence beyond his situation, (which was that of a common laborer,) there was nothing to induce a belief that it was the same person. Whoever he might be, however, even *he* too now has disappeared. He was killed accidentally, while felling one of those enormous hemlock trees, with which some parts of the great continent abound. A shallow grave was scooped for him ; a fellow-laborer's prayer was his only requiem ; and, whatever may have been his intellect, whatever his passions or strength of purpose, the frail body which once contained them now merely fertilizes the glade of an American forest, or else has become food for the bear or the jackall.

[The story of Aguirra, referred to in the foregoing narrative, occurs in one of our early periodical works, and is to the following effect : Aguirra was a Spanish soldier, under the command of Esquivel, governor of Lima or Potosi. For some small cause, or for no cause, (to make an example, or to wreak his spite,) this governor caused Aguirra to be stripped and flogged. He received some hundred stripes ; his remonstrances (that he was a gentleman, and as such exempt by law from such disgrace, and that what he had done was unimportant, and justified by common usage,) being treated with contempt. He endured the punishment in the presence of a crowd, of comrades and strangers, and swore (with a Spaniard's spirit) never to be satisfied but with his tyrant's blood. He waited patiently, until Esquivel

was no longer governor; refusing consolation, and declining from fancied unworthiness, all honorable employment. But, when the governor put off his authority, *then* Aguirra commenced his revenge. He followed his victim from place to place — haunted him like a ghost — and filled him (though surrounded by friends and servants) with perpetual dread. No place, no distance could stop him. He has been known to track his enemy for three, four, five hundred leagues at a time ! He continued pursuing him for three years and four months; and at last, after a journey of five hundred leagues, came upon him suddenly at Cuzco; found him, for the first time, without his guards; and instantly — stabbed him to the heart !

Such is the story of Aguirra. It is believed to be a fact; and so is the story which I have recounted above. The circumstances are not only curious as showing a strange coincidence, but they show also what a powerful effect a narrative of this kind may produce. For, there is little doubt, but that the South American tale, although it may not absolutely have generated the spirit of vengeance in Gordon's mind, so shaped and modified it, as to stimulate his flagging animosity; carried him through all impediments and reverses to the catastrophe; and enabled him to exhibit a perseverance, that is to be paralleled no where, except perhaps in the history of fanatics or martyrs.]

THE TWO SOLDIERS.

AN APOLOGUE.

To his son, Wilhelm, fresh from college, and proud of his learning, obtained from Greek and Roman writers, the merchant Singelhart related the following story:—

‘Two soldiers, who had been taken prisoners in battle, contrived, after a long slavery, to escape. The elder of the two, whose name was Platow, had a mild and thoughtful nature. In the younger, Ulric, appeared a mixture of boldness and vivacity, such as may be seen in garrison towns, and such as (ladies say) should belong to soldiers.

‘There was nothing in common between the two men, save their common danger. This produced a partial alliance of offence and defence, between them; and on this subject they held occasional conferences. But for the most part, they travelled silently by each other’s side, or shared the fruit and berries and chance ears of rice or wild corn which they discovered on their way.

‘They had to pass through strange countries, as yet scarcely guessed at by geographers. They beheld

extensive prairies which the buffalo haunts, and trackless savannas where the wild horse and the zebra enjoy boundless liberty. They penetrated savage regions, where even man preys upon his fellow, and lands debateable and arid deserts, where shepherds, armed to the teeth, overlook their flocks, or where roving bands settle for a time, but have no permanent home. At last, after many days' toil, they left a rich alluvial flat, where they for some time had been travelling, and began to ascend a bleak and mountainous country which appeared never to have been subjected to the hand of man. The snow (though it was almost summer) lay upon the higher peaks, whilst through the passes, where their road lay, fierce rain and howling winds kept up incessant clamor. It was nearly night when they arrived at a spot somewhat sheltered. Yet even there it was wild and gloomy, without fruits and without flowers; the black pine-trees, together with scanty grasses and a few ears of shrunken corn, being all that redeemed it from utter barrenness. Fatigue was stronger than hunger, and they slept.

'In the morning, just as the sun began to throw a cold light over the eastern mountains, the travellers awoke.

"Ha! what is this?" inquired Ulric. It was too plain. They were each bound fast to a rugged tree, "We are in the toils," continued the speaker.

"Yes," answered Platow, "our strength of mind which we discoursed upon so long yesterday has now an opportunity of showing itself."

"Ah!" replied Ulric, "if I were not so hungry you would soon see —"

‘ At this moment a young girl, six or seven years of age, of a rough but pleasant aspect, came smiling towards them; she bore in her hands a large bowl of milk, and under her arm was a wrapper composed of strips of bark or tough grass, which being opened displayed some large pieces of barley bread.

“ Eat ! drink ! ” — said she ; and her orders were obeyed with alacrity. She waited till they had finished their meal, and then said, “ My father will come and judge you presently ; but don’t be afraid, he is not so terrible as he looks ; ” and with these words she left them.

‘ It was an anxious moment. Platow summoned up his resolution to bear the worst with calmness ; and Ulric was inventing some ingenious falsehood to excuse himself for intruding within their host’s very uninviting territory, when a loud rough voice was heard at a distance, and presently a giant of vast size walked sturdily towards them, carrying in his hand a young pine, plucked up by the roots.

“ What have you come here for ? ” quoth he, when he was close to them. His voice sounded like thunder. “ Speak ! you are spies from the plains. What is it you want ? Is not your land fat enough, that you must come here and spy out the poverty of my home ? Will you steal the few goats that give food to me and my children ? Will you rob me of my little hoard of dry corn ? This is the second time that you have come to pilfer from me ; and now, villains, you shall die ! ”

“ Ah, sir ! ” exclaimed Ulric — he could utter no more.

“ We are poor travellers,” said Platow ; “ and

were passing, by accident, through your country. Our only wish is to reach once more the land where we were born."

"We will give you gold," interrupted Ulric; and he tendered some coins for the giant's acceptance, who looked contemptuously upon them.

"What stuff is here?" quoth he; and whirled the useless metal over a mountain summit some hundreds of feet high. "Do you think to bribe me with dirt like this? Of what use is it to me? Will it give me food or clothing? will it teach me —"

"We will teach you wisdom," joyfully cried Ulric.

"Ha!" said the giant, "that, indeed, is something. Come, let us begin."

Ulric, who belonged to several societies for diffusing useful (and a little useless) knowledge, and who out-talked every member at the annual meetings of the philosophers, eagerly commenced. "I shall first explain to you the latest theories respecting meteorolites, or stones thrown from the moon."

"The *what*?" cried the other angrily; but recollecting himself, he muttered aside, "I perceive that this is a jackass, or talking idiot."

"Well," pursued Ulric, "if you have no interest in that subject, I will show you how to unroll a mummy."

Platow smiled, and explained the nature of mummies, when the giant observed, "but we have no mummies here!"

Ulric admitted that this was an objection, and said, "Then I will unfold to you the mysteries of storms."

"That sounds well," said his host; "you can tell me when a storm is coming?"

“No, not that,” answered Ulric.

“Nor how to avert it?”

“No.”

“Well then, you know, by certain signs, how long it will last!”

“No.”

“What is it you are about to disclose, then?” inquired the other, impatiently.

“I will show you how storms are generated and impelled through the atmosphere, and how they sometimes revolve or proceed in circles, and how —”

“Bah!” exclaimed the giant; “all this is for the people of the air.”

“It is really difficult to hit on a subject,” said Ulric, now a little perplexed. At last a bright thought suddenly illumined his countenance, and he said — “I will explain to you the theory of rent, and show you how to hold a just balance between the manufacturing and the agricultural interests.”

“Hark ye, fellow!” said the giant, now thoroughly incensed, “you are laughing at my ignorance. You wish me to nail you against that rock, to furnish dinner for the eagles!”

Ulric protested quickly that, although self was generally below his thoughts, yet that such a mode of proceeding would be particularly disagreeable to him.

His host now assumed the interrogator. “You appear to be a silly fellow,” said he; “but I may be mistaken. I will, therefore, put a question or two to ascertain the value of your accomplishments. Can you wrestle with a bear?”

‘Ulric confessed that he could not, with any prospect of success.

‘“ Or come close upon the chamois ? ”

‘“ No.”

‘“ Or shoot dead a panther ? ”

‘“ No.”

‘“ Can you build your own house ? or weave your clothes or bed coverings from long grasses or the barks of trees ? ”

‘“ No.”

‘“ Can you choose the best ears of corn ? and sow them ? and weed them ? and water them ? and reap them ? and grind them, and turn them into bread ? ”

‘“ No — no — no.”

‘“ Yet we consider these things important in our country, and even in yours they cannot be entirely without use.”

‘The dialogue which we have endeavored thus far to repeat, was extended to considerable length. At the end of it the giant retired, saying that he should now take some rest, and that he would determine on their fate in the evening. He left them with a grim smile upon his countenance. Ulric’s spirit fell, and he announced to his brother prisoner that one or both of them would, in all probability, be cooked for supper.

‘After the lapse of an hour or two, the little girl, who had before brought them food for their breakfast, was seen again coming towards them with a supply for their noon-day meal. By this time, Ulric, after prodigious efforts, had contrived to free himself from his bonds, and with his knife, which he then was able to unsheath, he had also severed the bonds of his com-

panion, whom he was urging to escape. As soon as he saw the child approaching, he exclaimed —

“Ha! here is the monster’s cub again. She will cry, and alarm the brute who keeps us here. Come hither, young devil!” said he, seizing the child. “Your father has made us suffer, and we will now give him something to remember us by.” He raised his knife for a sacrifice.

“Stop! It shall not be so, Ulric,” cried Platow, interposing; “you shall not kill the child. It has not harmed us.”

“It shall die!” cried the other, furiously.

“It shall live!” said Platow, firmly. “I swear that you shall not harm it. What! did it not give us milk this morning, and will you pay it back in blood at noon?”

He spoke in vain. Ulric seized the child by the throat. At that instant, a laugh that made the mountains ring, sounded close behind them. The giant was there. He held a mighty club, which he brandished threateningly on high. A moment more, and as it seemed, they would be smashed into a jelly.

“Soh, rascals! this is the way you pay me for my milk and corn,” cried their host. “Come, let me see which I shall kill first. Ha! this is the fattest.” And with one hand he seized Ulric by the waist, and turned him round carelessly in the air, as one would turn a rat. After satisfying himself as to his victim’s condition, he tossed him gently down and said, “Now villain! strip and be quick. I can’t roast you with these rags on. But, first, have you anything to say why you should not die? I will give you a fair trial. You have two minutes to make your defence.”

‘Ulric stammered out some unintelligible words in his extremity : but in the end he gave in, and answered simply, “Nothing.”

“Well,” said the giant, “that is good at least. And you?” he asked, addressing himself to Platow, who replied,

“I had your child in my power, and — I did not kill her.”

“Kill her!” echoed the other. “What! kill a child! Is that what they teach ye to do in your country?”

“Well, then, I saved her from death.”

“That’s better;” returned the other; “and for that, — mark! I will spare *you*.”

“And my companion, too?” said Platow.

“No; he must die.”

“Spare him for my sake,” urged Platow, again.

‘The giant looked gravely, but kindly, upon him and said: “For your sake? — Well, I will spare him too. And now, know, men, that I have listened to your talk. You have never been out of my grasp; — no, not for a moment. Had you harmed my poor, sickly child, death instantly should have been your fate. But one of you was merciful, — and mercy begets mercy. A good deed should be returned twofold. And it is thus that I endeavor to repay one. Strangers! we are poor and wild people; but we have heads and hearts, fashioned after the same model as your own. And we wish, when you return to your rich and pleasant country, that you should be able to say, that there is no spot, however savage, where men may not learn something, — no spot where human

gratitude does not flourish, and where the wisdom of kindness may not be taught."

'A few evenings afterwards, as the two soldiers, well supplied with food, were travelling quietly towards their home, Ulric observed an unusual silence. At length, he said to his companion, "I have been thinking that the giant's heart — perhaps his mind — was almost as large as his body."

"I have thought so all along," replied the other.

'By this time they had reached their native land; and when they arrived at the gates of the principal city, Sapienza, they parted; each taking his way to his own home. It is said that the seeds sown by the mountain giant were not thrown away, even on the rocky bosom of Ulric. He became a wiser and a better man. In Platow they produced a less obvious benefit, the change within him being less; but the events of his journey were ever afterwards gratefully remembered. And when, in later years, his children clustered round him, he would often amuse and instruct them on summer evenings, by relating to them the fruitful lesson of wisdom which in his youth he had heard amongst the barren mountains.'

1837.



